

FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk August 6, 2017

East edition No 776

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Ramsgate in Pole position?

Council holds talks with Baltic ferry firm

POLITICS

Children's centre U-turn

Plans to close 19 sites set to be amended

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Green light for pylon route

Controversial Richborough Connection is approved

HISTORY

Bear pit fight not over yet

Battle to restore Victorian attraction rumbles on

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Can athletics champs recapture joy of 2012?

LAST week in KoS we reported on the much-talked about Olympic legacy, five years on from when London hosted perhaps the most memorable Games of a generation.

While half a decade is probably not the timespan Lord Coe and colleagues had in mind when they first planted the seed of this legacy, it seems the euphoria that gripped the nation back in 2012 has indeed had an effect already.

As well as growing numbers at a grassroots level, it appears to be having an early, tangible effect on our sporting achievements on the international stage as well.

England's Lionesses crashed out of the European Championships at the semi-final stage this week but will be remembered for having us on the edge of our seats throughout the tournament. Along with the achievements of the women's World Cup-winning cricket team, and Johanna Konta's fantastic journey to the final four at Wimbledon, it's been quite a summer for women's sport.

This weekend, of course, all eyes

turn back to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford once again, as Usain Bolt, Mo Farah and co descend on the capital for the world athletics championships.

In Kent, we boast some of the most promising athletics talent in the country in the form of Adam Gemili and Dina Asher-Smith, and we await to see whether they can deliver further glory over the coming days.

Anyone who watched the film about Bolt earlier this week will be able to appreciate what these stars put themselves through in their desperate attempts for success.

Sport truly can inspire us in all walks of life to work hard and look to better ourselves in everything we do.

In a year of incredible tragedy and trauma, perhaps we can look to sport as our escape, whether that's watching these elite stars or taking part ourselves.

So let's get behind our athletes at the world championships and hopefully we can look back on this summer as another truly memorable one for British sport.

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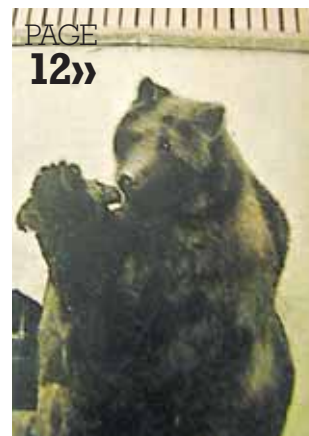
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Mum found guilty over death of five-month-old

By Luke May

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THE mother of a five-month-old baby boy found with "catastrophic brain injuries" and cocaine in his system has been convicted of causing or allowing his death.

Katherine Cox, 33, and boyfriend Danny Shepherd, 25, were arrested after Eli Cox died in hospital on April 27 last year, and were found guilty on Thursday.

Two weeks earlier, little Eli had fallen ill at the family home in Lapwing Close, Minster.

A post-mortem revealed he had suffered a "catastrophic brain injury consistent with being shaken and hitting his head."

He was also found with 28 bone fractures, which doctors believed he suffered over a 10-week period, along with traces of cocaine and amphetamine in his system.

A Maidstone Crown Court jury heard how an ambulance was called to the family home on April 13 when Eli had stopped breathing.

He was rushed to Medway Maritime Hospital, where a paediatrician noticed a number of bruises, believed to have been caused intentionally.

Police were called in, and

evidence from doctors revealed Eli's brain injury must have happened moments before his collapse, while the broken bones may have been suffered during five separate incidents.

Both Cox, a mother to nine children, and Shepherd denied being users of cocaine and amphetamine, despite five wraps of the latter substance being found by police in a garden shed at their home. A hair sample showed Eli had been "regularly exposed to amphetamine and occasionally exposed to cocaine", the court heard.

Det insp Ivan Beasley said: "The death of a child is never anything less than tragic but the circumstances behind Eli Cox's passing are especially upsetting for those of us who share a compassion for others. None of us will ever understand what compels people to cause harm to children, and it is unfortunately true to say that Eli suffered more than most and was robbed of his life before it had barely begun."

"Katherine Cox and Danny Shepherd maintained their innocence throughout but the jury saw through their lies."

Sentencing will take place on a date to be fixed for a psychiatric report to be prepared.



CONVICTED: Katherine Cox and her boyfriend Danny Shepherd were found guilty this week

Hundreds 'bullied' at county's scandal-hit ambulance service

HUNDREDS of employees at Kent's scandal-hit ambulance service have experienced bullying and harassment over the last year, a damning report has found.

South East Coast Ambulance Service (Secamb) was placed in special measures last year after a number of concerns were raised by watchdogs, including the treatment of some staff.

Consequently, the trust commissioned a large-scale independent report to help it better understand and help tackle bullying and harassment issues at the trust.

Some 2,000 staff participated in the research by Professor Duncan Lewis from Plymouth University, with 42 per cent of those who responded reporting some experience of bullying in the last 12 months.

The report told stories of staff having "only two tea breaks in three years", having instructions "believed as if they were a sergeant

major in the army" and of employees being "genuinely frightened" about speaking out over bullying.

There was also a consistent view that a "boys club" culture exists at the trust with "questions of sexual harassment and sexual grooming occurring in some parts of the Kent area".

The report adds: "Female employees appear to be the targets, including newly qualified young women."

Bosses say publishing the report in full is the first step in the trust tackling its findings and insist that the behaviours identified in the report are unacceptable and HR action is being taken against individuals where necessary.

Secamb chief executive Daren Mochrie said: "We chose to commission this independent report to help us address this worrying issue."

"The behaviours it describes are completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated, in any sense and at any level, moving forward."

Plans revealed for round the clock urgent treatment hub

A 24/7 centre for urgent, but not emergency treatment, is set to open near Medway Maritime Hospital's A&E department.

Last month health chiefs unveiled plans for urgent treatment centres at hospitals in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals, and it is understood bosses across the county are drawing up similar proposals.

It means a range of tests, treatments and services would be available in one centre around the clock from April 2019, if plans are given the green light. Patients needing emergency care would continue to be treated in A&E but by treating those needing urgent care elsewhere, bosses hope that pressures on the A&E department should be reduced.

Teenager convicted of three acid attacks in city centre

A TEENAGER who sprayed acid at three people after harassing them has been convicted.

Fahad Abdi, 18, from Forest Gate in east London carried out the revenge attack as his victims walked along St Peter's Place in Canterbury on February 10.

All three of his victims suffered blisters and burns and temporary loss of sight.

Investigating officer Terence Seager, said: "Abdi has shown that even at such a young age he is capable of premeditated violence with absolutely no regard for life. This was a particularly vicious assault which has physically and emotionally scarred the victims."

Abdi has been remanded in custody until sentencing takes place in September.



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£1,500 raised in memory of tragic Taiyah

FRIENDS of a 16-year-old girl who died after being electrocuted on the tracks at Herne Bay station last week have raised more than £1,500 in her memory.

Officers from British Transport Police were called to the station shortly before 7am on Wednesday and attended alongside paramedics from the South East Coast Ambulance Service, where Taiyah-Grace

Peebles was pronounced dead after sustaining serious injuries believed to be caused by the live track.

She was understood to have been with a group of friends near the station shortly before 11pm the night before. Officers confirmed over the weekend her death is no longer being treated as suspicious and a file will be prepared for the coroner.

Pylon route given green light despite fears it will 'scar' county landscape

By Tom Pyman

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PLANS for a controversial pylon route in east Kent have been given the green light by the government, with construction expected to start in just weeks.

The project, known as the Richborough Connection, proposes the construction of a 20km 400kV overhead line and pylons, and the removal of an existing 132kV UK Power Networks overhead line.

It would carry power from Richborough, near Sandwich - which will be receiving electricity pumped in from Belgium via the Nemo Link - to an electricity sub station in Canterbury.

National Grid submitted the project for approval of the government's planning inspectorate on January 14 last year, which was accepted a month later.

However, Thanet MPs Sir Roger Gale and Craig Mackinlay, as well as then-MP for Canterbury, Sir Julian



POWER: Richborough Connection

Brazier, wrote to a number of senior government figures to express opposition, fearing it would "scar" the county's landscape.

A decision by business secretary Greg Clark was expected in June, but

officials then said a verdict would be delivered in August.

Steve Self, project manager of the Richborough Connection said: "We would like to thank everyone for their feedback during the consultation and examination process, and for giving us your views since the start of the project, which has enabled us to develop and improve our proposals. We look forward to continuing our relationships with local communities over the next few years during the construction of the project."

The details of the construction programme are set to be finalised over the next few weeks before bosses carry out ground investigations in some areas along the route.

Construction is then expected to start next month, while project leaders insist they will be speaking with communities along the route.

The new connection will be ready for Nemo Link's connection date in two years, while the existing UK Power Networks line will be taken down between 2019 and 2021.



TUNNELS: By Thanet Hidden History

Secret tunnels found beneath Primark store

IMAGES of a network of tunnels and caves, believed to have been used during the Second World War, hidden beneath a Kent Primark store emerged this week.

The ground floor of the bargain fashion shop at Westwood Cross in Broadstairs was closed over the weekend after a sink hole appeared in the car park, and experts suggest the underground war tunnels are to blame.

Local history group, Thanet Hidden History, posted the photos on its Facebook page, declaring it the second time in three years that the store suffered from subsidence as a result of the hidden routes a few feet beneath the surface.

It is understood requests for information have been made to the Ministry of Defence in a bid to solve the mystery of the tunnels but attempts have so far hit a brick wall.

Primark re-opened its ground floor shopping area on Monday, as the group proudly declared its discovery of "hidden history, under your feet even on a Saturday shopping spree".

A spokesperson for Westwood Cross added: "We, and Primark, would like to thank all our customers and staff for their patience while these works were carried out."

'No concerns' over high-rise cladding

A REVIEW of the county's high-rise buildings has calmed fears of cladding in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy nearly two months ago.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service has checked all apartment buildings rising ten floors or above, all of which revealed no concerns over cladding, which was linked to the spread of the fire which killed at least 80 people.

Visits to residential blocks of six floors or more are expected to finish by mid-August, before the fire service begins its next phase of checking non-residential tower blocks including offices, hotels and other commercial buildings.

At the end of June, KoS visited one of the checks at Carl Ekman House in Northfleet.

A spokesperson from KFRS said: "Our community safety team have also been on hand to carry out home safety checks of people's own homes, as an extra reassurance and have handed out leaflets with safety advice, including in other languages."

Truckstop treated for 'invasive' mosquitoes

HEALTH specialists have assessed and treated an area around Ashford International truck stop for an "invasive" species of mosquito.

Teams from Public Health England (PHE) and the borough council took action to eradicate eggs and larvae of Aedes albopictus, known as Asian tiger, which has become more common in Europe in recent years.

Though the mosquito poses no immediate risk to public health, the decision was to treat the area and prevent it becoming established in the UK.

Since invasive mosquitoes became more widespread in France, surveillance has been conducted by PHE at motorway service stations in south east England on the main routes from the south coast ferry ports and Eurotunnel.

Darren Smith, general manager of the truckstop, said: "Experts from PHE and Ashford Borough Council eradicated the eggs and in the days since have been monitoring the site for any further signs of Asian Tiger Mosquitos. None have been found."

Concern over Calais centres for migrants

PLANS to set up two centres in France to handle hundreds of migrants returning to Calais may make the port town "even more of a magnet", a Kent MP has warned.

At the height of the migrant crisis, some 8,164 people were held at a detention centre in Dover between July and December 2015 as many looked to make their way across the Channel and enter the country via the port.

Last year, the camp known as 'the Jungle' was dismantled, but huge numbers have said to be returning to Calais in recent months, leading to the French interior minister announcing this week that the centres will be set up to help ease the pressure.

However, Dover MP Charlie Elphicke said: "There is a real risk that setting up these two new centres will make Calais even more of a migrant magnet."

"It means thousands more vulnerable people will be encouraged to make the perilous journey across Europe - with many falling into the hands of ruthless traffickers."

Council in U-turn over plans to close 19 children's centres

By Tom Pyman

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CONTROVERSIAL plans to close 19 children's centres across Medway are set to be scrapped, the council has suggested.

An intense six-week consultation took place earlier this summer to gauge public reaction to proposals to shut down the Sure Start centres and replace them with four 'super hubs'.

However, there was an intense backlash as parents marched and protested, with Labour frontbencher Angela Raynor even getting involved, describing the plans as "an absolute scandal" as more than 900 people submitted feedback.

Now, the Conservative-controlled council appears to have rowed back on its initial proposals, and is instead suggesting that 13 out of the 19 are maintained, with four of them becoming hubs, which would combine children's centre services for 0-5-year-olds, with early help teams who work with families and children who are aged five and upwards.

The proposed locations for the new hubs are at Gun Lane Children's Centre in Strood, All Saints in Chatham, Wayfield in Chatham and Woodlands in Gillingham.

If cabinet agrees on the proposed remodel at a crunch meeting next Tuesday, imple-



CONTROVERSY: Parents reacted angrily to the council's initial proposals

mentation could start in early 2018.

Andrew Mackness, Medway Council's portfolio holder for children's services, said: "Providing support and opportunities for Medway's children remains a key priority for the council. We have had some tough decisions to make following changes in government funding. I'd like to thank everyone who took the time to submit feedback or come along to one of the sessions to find out more information about the proposals.

"We have listened to the public's feedback

and used this to design a model for our early help services that best meets everyone's needs and can achieve the £1.6m that we are required to save.

"I will be recommending to cabinet on August 8 that early help services are provided through 13 centres, of which four will become new children and family hubs.

"The hubs will provide multi-agency services to the children and families within our communities who need and deserve our targeted help and support."

Carer jailed 20 years after abusing child

A CARER from Herne Bay who sexually assaulted a young boy more than 20 years ago has finally been jailed.

Scott Goldfinch of Cornwall Road was found guilty by a jury at Canterbury Crown Court who heard how he assaulted the boy after he had been left in his care in the town in 1996. Goldfinch was a teenager at the time and will now serve six and a half years in prison following a four day trial.

Volunteer's cardiac arrest at fundraiser

ST JOHN'S Ambulance first aiders leapt into action after a defibrillator fundraiser at Godington Gardens, in Ashford, ended with an ironic twist.

Volunteer, Steve Walker, 59, suffered a cardiac arrest during the recent event. A defibrillator was administered by fellow volunteer Dave Amos, and he woke up four hours later in hospital.

Drugs duo sentenced

TWO brothers, Jack Lavender, 25, and Tomas Lavender, 23, have been sentenced for drug dealing from a flat in Grovehurst Road, Dartford in January 2016.

Tomas received five years jailtime for intent to supply cocaine and cannabis. Jack received a four month suspended sentence for possession of cannabis. Both were sentenced on Tuesday.



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BOUVERIE PLACE

Campaigner-funded project to restore Victorian lift ends

WORK to restore a Victorian lift in Folkestone has finally been completed, after a local campaigner pumped more than £9,000 of his own money into the project.

Robert Moulard wanted to see the carriage, which took passengers from the seafront up a steep cliff on to the town's popular The Leas, restored to its former glory as a permanent reminder of what was once a hugely popular attraction.

First opened in 1890, it was one of a pair of stepped lift carriages - which means the seats within were on different levels in order to climb the steep slope - which operated on the now disused lines alongside the Leas Lift, an 1885 cable car on tracks.

The track and carriages were decommissioned in 1966 and



subsequent restoration efforts suffered a number of setbacks, after the wrong timber was used, causing the step lift to decay.

Mr Moulard then took matters into his own hands and the

completed project was unveiled at a grand ceremony, attended by around 75 people.

He told us: "Why should children have to spend £20 on history books when they can see the real thing?"

Stack could be 'almost permanent' after Brexit

KENT could become gridlocked by an "almost-permanent instigation of Operation Stack" if a Brexit deal sees greater regulation and enforcement measures at the Port of Dover, a report warns.

The document, produced by consultancy firm, Oxera, forecasts the impact of increased checks on traffic at the ports on the UK economy to be around £1 billion.

Bosses considered four scenarios, dubbed "degrees of frictionless", as to how the type of deal struck between ministers and the European Union will affect the UK's borders.

In the case of minimal friction, the report says: "While there may be some additional costs borne by businesses, the economic impact would be

broadly negligible, to the extent that this scenario looks similar to the status quo".

However, a high friction agreement, involving extensive regulation of products, with increased levels of enforcement, will lead to a significant increase in the requirements at borders, the report claims.

It adds: "The Port of Dover has called this scenario 'Armageddon', potentially leading to an almost-permanent instigation of Operation Stack — with extensive queues on the M20 and surrounding roads."

Kent ground to a halt in the summer of 2015 as disruption in Calais meant Stack was implemented repeatedly, causing huge queues on roads across the county.

Fire burns lorry driver

A LORRY driver was treated for burns after the seat of his cab caught fire.

Crews were called to the scene on the A228, near the RSPCA Centre crossroads just after 9pm on Thursday where they found a man, thought to be around 40 years old, suffering burns to his hand and fingers.

Attempted burglary

A 36-year-old man has been charged following an attempted burglary at a property in Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, in May this year.

Billy Friend, of Upper Fant Road, was remanded to appear at Maidstone Crown Court on Thursday, August 31.

25 years for Pilgrims

PILGRIMS Hospice, Thanet is celebrating 25 years of care at the Winter Gardens in Margate on September 1.

The evening will start with a three course meal, followed by a Michael Buble tribute and music up until midnight. For tickets call Karen Kenward on 01843 233934.

Dramatic four-car crash

TWO men were hospitalised after a four-car smash in Sittingbourne on Monday evening.

Emergency services were called to the scene in Crown Quay Lane just before 6pm, where firefighters used hydraulic rescue equipment to remove the roof of one car to release a man.



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Row over gluten-free cuts

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A DECISION to stop offering coeliac patients routine prescriptions for gluten-free products from September will "cost the NHS more in the long term", a charity has warned.

Health chiefs in west Kent made the controversial decision at a governing body meeting last week in a bid to save more than £100,000 from its annual budget.

The clinical commissioning group (CCG), which plans and buys healthcare for patients in Maidstone, Malling, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, decided to continue NHS funding for gluten-free products, but only for people with Phenylketonuria (PKU) who need specific low protein food.

The service first began when gluten-free foods were not as readily available as they are today, and the CCG has been looking across the board to make cuts with a limited budget and increasing demand for services.

However, the decision has been criticised by some organisations, including health charity, Coeliac UK.

A spokesperson said: "We are concerned that the measures taken by



CONTROVERSY: Health chiefs say they have no choice under current budget pressures

the CCG to save money will affect people's ability to stick to the gluten free diet and that this in turn will result in ongoing symptoms and also increase the likelihood of complications of coeliac disease.

"As well as the individual suffering this may cause, it will also cost the NHS more in the long term."

The CCG carried out a consultation

with the public over the winter about its proposal, and 55 per cent of the 505 people who responded to the on-line survey agreed at least in part.

Specifically, 29 per cent agreed routine prescriptions should be stopped completely, 26 per cent thought there should be some exemptions, while 46 per cent thought routine prescribing should continue.

Dr Bob Bowes, chair of the CCG, said the perilous financial position of the health service had forced the group's hand.

"I know this will be disappointing to many people with coeliac disease in west Kent and I would like to assure them that ending prescribing of gluten-free food is not a decision we took lightly," he added.

Green light for care home

PLANS for a 75-bed care home for patients well enough to leave hospital but not ready to return home have been given the green light.

Kent Medical Campus, near junction 7 of the M20, has been identified as the location for the healthcare development, which will provide 24 hour nursing accommodation for the frail and elderly, providing a mix of rehabilitation, respite and dementia care.

Chiefs at Maidstone Borough Council then rubber-stamped the plans which were submitted in May.

Want to be a movie extra?

DOVER residents are being asked to come forward and appear as extras for a movie being filmed in the port town.

Anyone aged between 16 and 80, who has a valid National Insurance number is welcome to apply to work on the film which will be set in the 1950s.

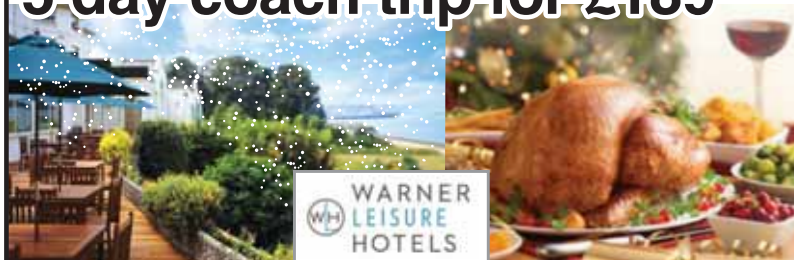
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15 AUGUST WIND IN THE WILLOWS AT UPNOR CASTLE

For tickets <http://www.boxtreeproductions.co.uk/>

Gates open: 5.30pm; Performance starts: 6.30pm

Join Mole as he says 'dang' and 'blast it!', throws down his broom and sets off on an adventure out of his hole. On his journey he meets the effervescent Ratty who shows him the wonders of picnics and messing about on the river, Badger, the wise old sage of the woods and Toad of toad hall, whose exploits cause all manner of mischief and upheaval. When the Otters and Stoats take over Toad Hall it's up to Mole and Ratty, Badger and Toad to retake control. With Inventive staging, original songs and magical storytelling we invite audiences to enjoy this classic tale of adventure, friendship and picnics in Boxtree Production's unique and energetic way!

All seating is unreserved. Please bring your own blankets/low-backed chairs - seating is not provided. You are welcome to bring your own picnics & refreshments. There are no refreshments available on site.

15 AUGUST MAKE YOUR OWN WIND IN THE WILLOWS CHARACTER CRAFTS, 10.30AM TO 3.30PM

Inspired by Boxtree Production's performance of Wind in the Willows, taking place in the castle grounds this evening, young people can design and decorate their own character from the classic story - who will you choose: Ratty, Mole, Badger or the infamous Toad? Children must be accompanied by an adult. 80p per child, plus admission fee, Upnor Castle

30 AUGUST PRIDE & PREJUDICE AT ROCHESTER CASTLE

For tickets <http://www.chapterhouse.org/>

Gates open: 6.30pm; Performance starts: 7.30pm

Take a step back in time with Chapterhouse Theatre Company to meet Elizabeth Bennet, Jane Austen's most loveable heroine. When Elizabeth meets the rude and abrupt Mr Darcy, she loathes him at first sight. But is there more to him than meets the eye? Brought to life by award winning writer Laura Tuner, this brand-new adaptation celebrates the 200th Anniversary of Jane Austen's death and promises to be the most splendid evening of the summer. So, join friends and family as you picnic under a beautiful summer sky and lose yourself in this unforgettable love story. After all, it is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

All seating is unreserved. Please bring your own blankets/low-backed chairs - seating is not provided. You are welcome to bring your own picnics & refreshments. There are no refreshments available on site.

30 AUGUST MAKE YOUR OWN LIZZIE & DARCY CHARACTER CRAFTS IN TOWER TWO 10.30AM TO 3.30PM

Inspired by Chapterhouse Theatre's performance of Pride & Prejudice, taking place in the castle grounds this evening, young people can design and decorate their own character from this classic story - who will you choose: Lizzie or Darcy?

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

80p per child, free entry to Tower Two, Rochester Castle

31 AUGUST PETER PAN AT UPNOR CASTLE

For tickets <http://www.chapterhouse.org/>

Gates open: 5.30pm; Performance starts: 6.30pm

Chapterhouse Theatre Company are delighted to present an all new production of Peter Pan. Join Wendy, Michael and John Darling on their adventures with Peter, far away on the magical island of Neverland. There they encounter the enchanting mermaids, magical fairies and the cruellest pirate of them all, Captain Hook. Presented by special arrangement with Samuel French and in support of Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, J.M.Barrie's timeless classic is brought to life in a brand new adaptation by award winning writer Laura Turner, with beautifully designed costumes, music and songs. Join Peter and his friends for what promises to be the most magical evening of the summer.

All seating is unreserved. Please bring your own blankets/low-backed chairs - seating is not provided. You are welcome to bring your own picnics & refreshments. There are no refreshments available on site.

31 AUGUST MAKE YOUR OWN PETER PAN CHARACTER CRAFTS IN THE BARRACK BLOCK,

10.30AM TO 3.30PM

Inspired by Chapterhouse Theatre's performance of Peter Pan, written by JM Barrie, taking place in the castle grounds this evening, young people can design and decorate their own character from this classic story - who will you choose: Peter, Wendy, Tinkerbell or Hook?

80p per child, plus admission fee, Upnor Castle



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BATTLE OF MEDWAY TRAIL

Sun 30 July - Sun 3 Sept, 10am-6pm

(last admission 5.15pm)

Take part in our trail around the castle looking for clues to find out what happened at Upnor Castle during the Battle of Medway for a chance to win a small prize.

80p per child, plus admission fee.

MAKE YOUR OWN COLOURFUL CRITTER

Mon 7 Aug, Wed 9 Aug, Mon 14 Aug, Wed 16 Aug, Wed 23 Aug, 10.30am-3.30pm

Join our hands-on family craft activity to make your own Colourful Critter. There are four to collect or you can design your own. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

80p per child, plus admission fee.

PAINTING THE BATTLE OF MEDWAY

with artist Kevin Clarkson Mon 21 Aug & Wed 30 Aug, 10.30am-3.30pm

Local artist Kevin Clarkson meticulously researched the Battle of Medway to create several new paintings of the events at Upnor in 1667 for our anniversary commemorations this year. Join Kevin on site to draw your own Battle of Medway masterpiece.

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Wed 23 Aug - Thur 24 Aug, 10am -3.30pm

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The two-day school costs £40. To book your place, contact info@playonwordstheatre.com or 07971512209

DRAW A MINI MASTERPIECE

Fri 1 Sept, 10.30am -3.30pm

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POTENTIAL: Cross Channel ferries have not operated from Ramsgate since 2013



Port in Pole position for ferries as Baltic firm meets the council

The Port of Ramsgate has lost more than £17m in seven years, but plans to restore ferry services were boosted this week as Thanet chiefs confirmed they had held talks with a leading European operator

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

PLANS to resume ferry services from the Port of Ramsgate have taken a step forward after the council held talks with a leading Polish firm.

Thanet District Council chiefs are understood to have met with representatives from Polferries - the largest operator in its country, which runs services across the Baltic Sea between Poland and Sweden.

However, the talks are understood to only be at an embryonic stage and there are at least two other parties in discussion with the town hall.

The port is owned by the council and there has been much enthusiasm to reactivate it as a key transport route, with cross-Channel operations falling by the wayside since the collapse of TransEuropa in 2013.

Previously, services from Ramsgate carried passengers to Dunkirk and Calais in France and Ostend in Belgium.

Earlier this year, bosses appointed industry expert, Robert Hardy of Paradox Consulting, to a special team dedicated to the port's future.

Council leader Chris Wells told KoS: "We will talk to anyone who is

serious about this because we believe it will bring jobs and prosperity to the area."

Polferries is a former state-owned company founded in 1976 and runs the ferry terminal in the city of Gdansk.

The developments come after it emerged that the port had lost some £17.7m over the last seven years, with some fearing it may have no future at all.

Former councillor turned blogger Ian Driver said this week: "These astronomical financial losses, the failure to attract a new ferry operator, and the steep decline in ships using the port, demonstrate beyond doubt that Ramsgate port is a ghost port which doesn't have a financially sustainable future and only survives because it is being propped up by the taxpayer."

"I can't see how Ramsgate port can survive for much longer in its present guise especially bearing in mind the fierce competition from nearby Dover, which is now beginning a £200m, three-year expansion and modernisation programme and the highly successful, state-of-the-art, London Gateway Port less than 70 miles away."

"It wouldn't surprise me if next year the number of ships berthing at Ramsgate fell below 100, proving what most of us already know - that

Ramsgate port is a ghost port in terminal decline.

"Thanet Council should now stop throwing good money after bad and launch an urgent review into the future of the port which must include extensive consultation and engagement with the public."

Despite recent difficulties, many believe a fully-functioning port in Thanet could help ease pressure on Dover, where there are often lengthy queues, and fears that delays and complications could be exacerbated as Britain departs the European Union.

Both Mr Driver and Craig Mackinlay have called for a more leisure-based operation in Ramsgate to supplement and enhance the neighbouring harbour.

The South Thanet MP said he wanted to see focus switch to "a range of light non-polluting industries and tourism", which he said would help regenerate the area, while simultaneously protecting its maritime heritage.

Cllr Wells added: "I'm aware of Mr Mackinlay's wishes for the port but sadly he doesn't own it and can't impose what he wants upon it."

A council spokesperson confirmed to KoS that it has been working on re-establishing ferry services at the port for the last two years.

She added: "This has included investment in dredging and repairs of the Ro-Ro berths to ensure we are ready for business."

"The team, which includes a consultant with over 30 years' experience of the cross-Channel market, has been in discussions with several interested parties, both in the UK and on the continent, to provide a long term sustainable solution and to relieve some of the traffic issues approaching the Port of Dover."

Meanwhile, Belgian plans to fine pleasure boats travelling from the harbour in Ramsgate up to €750 for carrying a certain type of fuel have been scrapped after Mr Mackinlay won a reprieve from officials.

The MP announced last week he would be writing to Belgian ambassador to the UK, Rudolf Hugelen, after fines were levied against a number of UK pleasure boat owners when visiting or accessing Belgian waters where their tanks have been found to be carrying what is known as red diesel.

Bulk diesel at British marinas is routinely only available as 'red' but it is unlawful in Belgium to use the fuel for propelling a private pleasure craft.

The Conservative was told some fines have been imposed even against pleasure boats passing within six miles of the Belgian coast that have

no intention of making landfall, but are merely passing to the Netherlands, and described the scheme as "perverse".

The EU Committee on Excise Duty meets on September 18 where Mr Mackinlay, who has secured the pledge from Mr Hugelen, hopes the matter will be addressed further.

"As the ambassador duly concedes, France and Holland have both shown flexibility towards British pleasure crafts navigating with red diesel as they know it is fully taxed and legal in accordance with UK customs and duty requirements," he said.

"So I am pleased that the Belgians are now applying common sense to the matter once again, at least until such time as the relevant EU Committee makes a judgement on its future application."

"These fines are also working to the detriment of Belgian marinas and harbours as UK boat owners are now opting not to call into Belgian ports."

"It is, therefore, in all our interests to have this matter resolved as efficiently and effectively as possible."

■ What do you think? Would you like to see ferry services returning to Ramsgate? Write to us with your views at Room G46, The Panorama, Park Street, Ashford, Kent TN24 8EZ, or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

Campaign to save Victorian bear pit gains momentum

Developers looking to build homes at Ebbsfleet Garden City say they will commemorate its location with a plaque, but campaigners tell us why they want to see it fully restored

By Luke May
luke.may@archant.co.uk

THE fight to save an historic Victorian bear pit hidden beneath land earmarked for the Ebbsfleet Garden City has been boosted after council chiefs said the feasibility of the project should be explored.

Opened in 1837, Rosherville Gardens was a key tourist attraction throughout the 19th century, not only boasting the bear pit and adjoining caves, but also a lake, picturesque gardens and a cliffside entrance.

Its popularity reportedly drew more than a million visitors a year, many coming across the Thames from the capital by paddle steamer to experience its unique offerings.

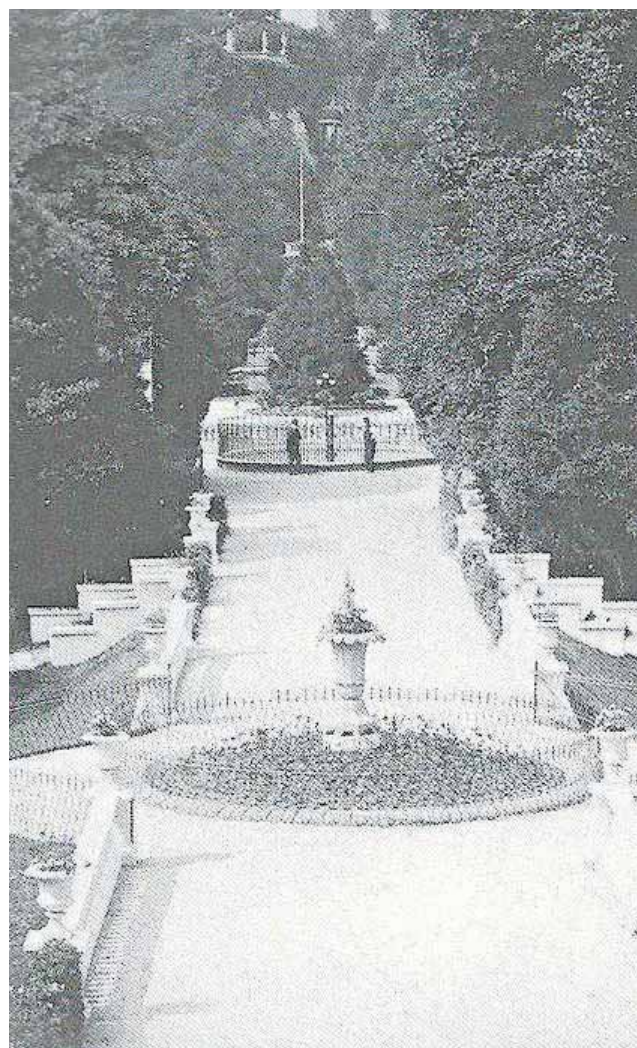
However, in 1886 a train station opened on the Gravesend West branch railway, and the advent of rail travel ultimately led to the gardens' demise, as Londoners instead chose to make their way down to Margate and other areas along the Kent coast.

Eventually, the venue closed in 1914 as the First World War broke out, and in the subsequent years, land was sold off and the site of the gardens was cleared.

Nearly a century later in 2012, the bear pit was dug up for excavation, but was almost instantly covered



HISTORY: The unearthed bear pit during the 2012 excavation (left) and how Rosherville Gardens used to look (right)



over again.

Shortly after, however, having been established as the only brick-built bear pit in the country, it was given Grade II listed status, thus protecting it against development.

Work is currently underway to provide some 15,000 homes at the garden city, and developers, Keepmoat Homes, are putting together plans to build 700 homes themselves, as well as a school and shopping centre on the Northfleet Embankment East site.

Mike Dempsey, regional managing

director at Keepmoat, said the developer is "commemorating the location of the bear pit," by "marking its location as a point of historical interest," after it carried out a heritage assessment at the site.

Chiefs are expected to submit a formal planning application to Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) - the public body overseeing the growth of the garden city - later this month following a recent consultation, but local campaigners have also gone to neighbouring Gravesham Borough Council for its thoughts.

They want to see recognition go one step further and are urging bosses to consider permanently unearthing the pit, and making it a key feature of any future housing development.

A petition has been recently launched and hundreds of people have since added their name to the request to bring back the bear pit, insisting it could provide similar levels of interest and tourism as it did back in the Victorian era.

Architect Neege Allen Navarria from Gravesend Futures, one of the campaign groups backing the petition, told KoS: "The bear pit still exists almost intact under a few meters of soil.

"It can be unearthed, restored and be made accessible as a real heritage asset and a living memory to future generations of the Victorian Rosherville Gardens. I'd say work would take around £250,000.

"Just putting a plaque in isn't enough, there are some very special

places around Gravesham and we need to celebrate that more, this is a great opportunity to do that."

The groups clarify that they wouldn't want to see live bears feature in the restored attraction, but have suggested a desire for an appropriate structure, similar to the one at the restored pit at the Botanical Gardens in Sheffield, which also has Grade II listed status.

Historic England, the statutory body responsible for listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments, describes the site as "a very rare surviving example", adding that "the open bear pit and floor survives relatively intact, and its plan, with four attached chambers or dens, remains legible, although it is acknowledged that much of the roofs of the four dens is missing".

It is understood Historic England has been consulted by the EDC over proposals for the site and has raised no concerns with the submitted plans.

Bosses insist that if the bear pit was fully exposed as the campaigners wish, it would require extensive programmes of conservation, rebuilding and reconstruction with a permanent commitment for maintenance and repair.

Responding to the petition this week, Gravesham Borough Council leader, David Turner, said: "Suggestions that Gravesham council isn't interested in this element of its history is unfair.

"A considerable amount of officer time was taken to respond to the ap-

plication for which, as just a consultee, we received none of the planning application fee.

"In our response we pointed out that even though interpretation through a piece of modern artwork appears to be the favoured approach due to likely fragility and the significant initial and ongoing cost of exposing the bear pit we encouraged Ebbsfleet Development Corporation not to rule out full exposure and should further investigate the feasibility of achieving that."

A spokesman for EDC added: "We are working towards taking the application by Keepmoat to our planning committee soon and our assessment will take into account all of the representations made during the public consultation."

More than 600 homes were started in the garden city in the last year and the development's first primary school, Cherry Orchard, will open in September, just 18 months after being given planning permission.

Work has also begun on a new £12m bridge linking Springhead Park with Ebbsfleet International Station and bosses last week announced a £30m pledge to invest in new electricity sub stations and connections to power the development.

The garden city has also received 'healthy new town' status from the NHS and launched a pioneering scheme earlier this summer to monitor the fitness levels of dozens of residents in order to encourage active living and attempt to reduce the strain on health services in north Kent.



ATTRACTION: Rosie the bear at Rosherville Gardens

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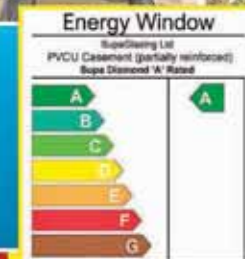
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Putting party politics aside to lead through difficult times

Gravesham Borough Council leader David Turner reveals his respect for the opposition, thoughts on Theresa May's election campaign and how the local authority still balances the books despite relentless government cuts

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

THREE years ago, David Turner vowed he was "going to stop saying yes to everybody". At 72, as he was then, he thought it best to start reducing some of his myriad of commitments.

But the best laid plans of mice and men rarely play out as expected.

Earlier this year he took on the not insignificant role as leader of Gravesham Borough Council following former Conservative group leader John Cubitt's decision to step down due to ill health.

Oh, and agreed to become company secretary of the England Rugby Football Schools Union. And that's in addition to his role as chairman of the pathway group for Kent Cricket, which seeks to identify emerging young talent to join the county's ranks.

This is clearly not a man who likes simply to put his feet up and enjoy retirement.

Which is probably for the best, as the local authority faces some of the most remarkable challenges in its history.

Not only is funding from Whitehall being slashed, but Gravesham has a host of enormous projects on its doorstep - from the controversy of the Lower Thames Crossing to the £3.2bn London Resort project and the 15,000-home strong Ebbsfleet Garden City project.

Now is certainly not the time for the faint-hearted.

"We've saved £3 million in case we need it," Cllr Turner explains as the council looks to balance the books. "We've just closed most of the public toilets and brought in a community toilet scheme which is going to create more toilets than we started with. That will save money and then we'll move from there. If they come up now saying we need to save more millions then we'll have to try and do something to adapt to that."

"What we haven't done yet is reduce the services. We haven't cut anything. At the moment, we've saved more money than we actually need to save. With the savings we've made, we're in no desperate crisis and have an excellent team."

"In the very worst scenario we'd have to cut out little bits such as from the Riverdale Festival [the annual free community event]. We might have to cut one stage out, for example, to save £25,000."

Cllr Turner has certainly seen some significant changes at a local level.

First elected 41 years ago onto the council, he admits he didn't expect the current austerity era to last quite so long when it first was introduced back in 2010.

He reflects: "I would have thought we'd have gone through a phase where we balance the books and life would be good."

"So, no, I thought we may have sorted things out by now. What people don't like is that they won't spend small amounts of money for local government but the second something happens in Iraq, they spend millions in sending the troops out there yet we can't afford another million next year."

"What annoys me most is that suddenly this money comes out of nowhere. I'm very much for the troops, don't get me wrong, but there must be money tucked away."

It's a relatively rare moment of strong political views from a man who admits he grew up with no particularly political leanings.

Unusually, but somewhat refreshingly, he is full of praise of the leader of the local Labour group, John Burden - a former leader himself - and speaks highly of other opposition figures.

"I'm just interested in serving local people," he says, "it sounds a bit trite but that's what I do."

"If the Labour group have a good idea then we'll embrace it."

"I didn't join the council to say 'hate them, love us', I was just interested in helping other people. One very nice lady was once part of the Tory group and she decided to join the Labour group. I remember saying to a fellow party members 'does she suddenly becomes a horrible lady as a result, is that what you're saying?'. It's nonsense."

"We all work together. If they come up, in a council meeting, with a fairly contentious argument, you don't agree with it but you don't take the opportunity to slag each other off. Outside of the meetings, John Burden and I work well together. It allows us to do things for the community. I won't get involved in party politics in that way."

And what of Theresa May?

"I think she's fortunate to be where she is. To take a 20-point lead in the polls and lose it; that takes some doing."

"I'm not a clever politician but every one I've talked to in the last 30 years knows that the grey vote is crucial to winning an election. To suddenly turn around and say they're going to



LEADER: Cllr Turner has stepped into the role since the departure of John Cubitt due to ill health



take my house away from me [to pay for care] is a good way to lose votes.

"I also don't think the way they're treating local government is very good. We find it difficult to recruit staff. When they say, we may put more money in but they'll put it back into Kent County Council, not to us."

Born and bred in Sidcup, back in the 1960s, he trained to become a pilot before opting instead for a career in teaching maths, first at Chislehurst & Sidcup Grammar and then at Gravesend Grammar.

He gave up teaching in 1989 and became co-founded of Public Sector Software Ltd, a firm developing soft-

ware primarily for the public sector. Retiring from that in 2002, he then spent five years teaching at the Medway Secure Training Centre in Rochester.

Then, from retirement, his activities revolved around his council work and continuing various roles with his love of sport - and in particular rugby and cricket.

"When I was young I was a keen sportsman," he explains. "But I had to stop playing rugby because I was doing the flying. Your pilot licence is attached to your medical which they do every six months and when they asked 'has anything happened since

last time' I'd have to tell them I'd had a bang on the head while playing and a couple of days in hospital. For fear they'd take my licence away I stopped playing."

Instead, he went into coaching where he focused primarily on youth sides. But refereeing too was also a major passion and he did that at all levels below international for around 50 years.

But it is in the youth game in which his impact has been significant.

As a former England U-16s selector he had some notable successes.

He said: "My colleagues told me to only pick public school boys. They

said 'you're only choosing early maturing lumps rather than picking boys who aren't great now but will be great when they're older'.

"But eight of those 'early maturing lumps' were in the England side that won the grand slam in 2016. And all eight are now in the Lions side."

For now, though, the main focus is on leading the local authority during its most challenging time. And collaboration, it seems, could be the way forward.

Explains Cllr Turner: "We've saved £80,000 here, £100,000 there by combining services [with other local authorities] so in some respects, it

sounds a good idea but in the end you are sharing everything and become one authority."

A planned 'super council' in the east of the council failed to materialise, so could this move see those in the north of the county come to a formal agreement?

"I'm sure lots of people would love a unitary," he says. "I think it can work with us combining some but, culturally, it's who you want to combine. You have to work out who you can work with. At the moment, it wouldn't quite work but you have to think about who you're happy to work with and the structure."



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The Dunkirk heroics which didn't make it to the cinema

A bizarre episode in the story of Dunkirk's little ships which did not make it into Christopher Nolan's blockbuster film has been unearthed by historian **Hugh Sebag-Montefiore** while researching his best selling book about Britain's most famous evacuation. Here, he pens the first of two articles for Kent on Sunday

D EPICTING the torment endured by the civilian owners of little ships that went to France to rescue the British Army from the beaches is one of the highlights of Dunkirk. Christopher Nolan's latest blockbuster. However even the dramatic events portrayed in the film cannot surpass the bizarre nature of the story of one little ship that ended up in Ramsgate at the end of its mercy mission to Dunkirk.

The motor launch *Advance* was owned by Colin Dick, a man whose political leanings might have disqualified him for the task of rescuing British soldiers from Hitler's Army had they been known.

Unbeknown to those summoning him, both he and at least one of his companions on *Advance* had in their time been members of Oswald Mosley's Black Shirts, and the British Union of Fascists, an organisation that might have been expected to support

Hitler rather than the army opposing him.

However whatever the allegiances of the *Advance's* crew prior to Dunkirk, by 1940 they had turned their lives around.

Dick's account describes how he was telephoned by the Admiralty on May 27, the first full day of the evacuation, and told that his launch might be needed: "We were to go at once to Teddington to remove any private gear remaining on board."

They were told to depart the next morning, which they did, arriving in Sheerness at lunchtime on May 28 where they were referred to HMS Wildfire.

Dick's report does not disclose whether he told the naval officers on HMS Wildfire that he had only just left a nursing home where he had been confined with 'internal trouble'.

Nor does it mention whether the Navy were ever informed that one of his companions had recently been ex-

amined by a medical board, and declared unfit for any kind of national service.

It does reveal however that Eric Hamilton-Piercy, his second companion, a married man with four children, never had the chance to tell his family where he was going before setting off.

It was lucky Hamilton-Piercy did not drop out because, as Dick admitted, "Piercy, the only physically fit member of the party, managed to relieve his rather invalid shipmates of a great deal of exertion".

That night Dick and his crew motored from Sheerness to Dover. Dick's account describes how after arriving at Dover during the early hours of May 29, "an officer came down the jetty, and at last told us what we were wanted to do, that it would be dangerous, but was very important, and that we should have ample support from the RAF."

Then, after turning down their last

opportunity to go ashore, they set out for Dunkirk that same morning "in company with other boats".

Dick's and his companions' experiences at Dunkirk did not require them to do anything that might strike the reader as being especially dramatic.

But the mere fact that these ordinary civilians, who, like the other civilian small boat owners operating off the beaches, stuck to their task so persistently and phlegmatically in the face of considerable discomfort and danger, deserves the highest commendation.

Advance, and the other small boats accompanying Dick and his crew, reached Dunkirk at around midday on May 29.

As they approached, they realised that what they had taken for a cloud bank was in fact the smoke given off by the burning town.

No sooner had they arrived off the beaches, than during an action an

echo of which appears in the Dunkirk film, they were attacked and machine gunned by two German planes which flew so low overhead that one of them is believed to have ripped or shot away *Advance's* signal mast.

These two semi-invalids and Hamilton-Piercy, the family man who had never been exposed to gunfire before, could have been forgiven if they had been overwhelmed by what they must have regarded at the time as a very lucky escape.

But it merely strengthened their re-



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Mail On Sunday



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The Times



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DRAMA:
Thousands were
evacuated at
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solve. Lieutenant Dann, who was leading the convoy, has described how after this first murderous machine gun attack from the air: "three cheerful bearded grinning faces appeared above the Advance's fore cabin roof, and three pairs of hands were clasped and shaken overhead as a signal that all was well. Only the Jolly Roger was lacking to complete the picture."

Once off the beaches, they decided to operate a kind of relay service.

Advance was to pull the whaler

which they had towed all the way from Sheerness as near to the beach as Dick dared, and then he was to stay put, while the others rowed the whaler closer to the beach.

The plan was that the whaler would be filled up with soldiers, and rowed back to the Advance, which would then tow it out to a destroyer waiting further out to sea.

But this procedure, which sounded so simple in theory, was not easy to apply in practice.

In the course of the Advance's very

first trip, the whaler capsized near the beach, and the two oarsmen had to be helped to bale the water out before it could be put back into the sea.

During their third trip, the whaler, which was full of soldiers, hit an underwater obstacle, and sank.

Fortunately Dick in Advance, and another vessel, were able to rescue all the soldiers as well as Dick's companions.

During the next trip, however, disaster struck while Advance was alongside a destroyer.



HEROES: Colin Dick and Eric Hamilton-Piercy

German aircraft appeared in the skies above them while soldiers were clambering up the nets lowered over the destroyer's side.

On seeing the planes, the destroyer lurched forward without warning the Advance crew, in order to take evasive action, and, as Dick reported: "Three or four men were seen to fall overboard, some being crushed between the destroyer's side and Advance's port quarter."

Dick and his companions only managed to rescue one of these men who was lucky to escape with his life and what appeared to be a broken thigh.

Undaunted, Dick and his companions just carried on, turning the tiller and going in to the beaches yet again.

As they towed the next whaler full of soldiers out to the destroyer, a bomb was dropped near Advance throwing Dick off his feet, and sinking the whaler. This time all the men were rescued, and were duly placed

on larger ships. But Advance's hull was left leaking, and a large hole was visible above the water line.

They nevertheless carried on with their fetching and carrying duties, but from that moment on, stopped operating their own whaler, preferring to pick up men from any vessel they found floating near the beach which included other ships' whalers, floating pontoons and even canoes.

It was only later that evening, when they realised their petrol supply was running low, that they finally decided they could do no more, and returned to Ramsgate, pleased no doubt to have done their bit, and grateful to have lived to tell their tale.

The paperback and a new audiobook of the updated version of Hugh Sebag-Montefiore's Dunkirk: Fight To The Last Man are published by Penguin. The paperback of his book on the Battle of the Somme will be published in November.

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Slaves set to top LeeFest bill with a surprise gig

Founder Lee Denny tells us about how the festival has grown from its humble beginnings in a Beckenham garden

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

PUNK duo Slaves are set to play a surprise gig in their home town of Tunbridge Wells at this year's LeeFest, KoS can reveal.

Organisers of the increasingly-popular festival say the addition of Laurie Vincent and Isaac Holman to an already star-studded line-up, including singer/songwriter Jake Bugg and Radio One DJ Annie Mac, is set to make this summer's event the biggest and best yet.

"It's going to be incredible," founder Lee Denny told us this week.

"Their local link makes it extra special. They have had an incredible couple of years and have played some huge slots, including the Other Stage at Glastonbury.

"We have been trying to get them for several years and this time we got a last minute call only a few weeks ago saying they might be able to make something work.

"It was just a case of the stars align-

ing at the right time.

"This is definitely our biggest and best yet in terms of the profile of the line-up and developing what the festival is about.

"There's a few really strong dance acts and indie bands that could be enough for a specialist festival elsewhere."

Also featuring on the bill this year is a DJ set from critically acclaimed collective Jungle, as well as performances from the likes of Kate Tempest, Percolate, Regression Sessions and Good Life.

Organisers would also stress that it's not all about the music, however, with 'the Neverland' sprinkling additional magic across the festival's three days.

Visitors are invited to explore different 'realms' on the site, where they can enjoy a casino, workshops, tribe games, a retro-futuristic gaming arcade and a Cabaret club of comedy, spoken word, debates and burlesque.

An independent festival, LeeFest has become something of a phenomenon in recent years, gaining mainstream acclaim when it won 'Best



HEADLINERS: Slaves will be back in their home town of Tunbridge Wells for the festival

Grassroots Festival' at the UK Festival Awards and 'Best Festival' at the Association of Independent Music Awards.

Its rise to stardom began as an act of teenage mischief, when Mr Denny's parents left him in charge of their Beckenham home under the strict instruction there were to be no house parties.

Instead, the then 16-year-old decided to hold a festival in the back garden, as it technically wasn't

breaking his parents' rules.

Through word of mouth, Mr Denny quickly managed to cram 150 people in and then saw the festival snowball with double that number attending a similar event the following year, before some 600 turned up to a festival held on a school field.

Last year, an advert for LeeFest occupied a prime slot before the screening of blockbuster films at cinemas, and, clearly, with the ability to attract the likes of Slaves, Bugg and Mac, it has now reached a whole new level.

What the festival prides itself on, however, is helping young bands establish themselves, after playing a part in launching the careers of a number of acts who have gone on to enjoy extraordinary success: London Grammar, Bastille, Years & Years, Clean Bandit and Jack Garratt to name but a few.

Mr Denny insists that philosophy remains at the heart of the festival and that it won't be lost amid the excitement of some of Britain's biggest music stars descending on John Darlings Farm, just outside the spa town, next week.

Likewise, the founder intends to maintain the same intimacy and togetherness that makes the event so unique and popular among regular visitors in its eleven years of existence.

"We are very cautious about how we want to grow the festival and making sure we keep that community spirit," he said.

"That's created by the people that have been coming for a long time and maintaining that is something we put a lot of work into.

"We're expecting 5,000 to come and we're on track for that, but it's still pretty intimate.

"We put a lot of energy and resources into finding young bands and helping to get them some really good exposure.

"Hopefully everyone that comes will support them as they always have, and go on to talk about them afterwards."

After more than a decade of success, Mr Denny is keen to continue the festival's growth, but doing so while keeping all the charming elements that made it so appealing in the first place is a challenge.

The organisational team has grown significantly year-on-year, with ten people employed as full-time workers before dozens arrived on the site earlier this week to start building the set, until, ultimately, when the festival officially opens its gates, there is a team of well over 300 in operation.

"There's always difficulties because we are extremely ambitious and we've never really done the same thing twice, we're always looking for new ideas," Mr Denny said.

"This year we decided to make the three main stages twice as big and with lots of special effects for the first time.

"We want to push ourselves creatively which means there are lots of stumbling blocks but that's part of the fun."

■ LeeFest will run this year from Thursday, August 10 until Saturday, August 12, with tickets still available to buy at <https://leefest.org/>



POPULAR: LeeFest has grown into one of the most hotly-anticipated festivals in the country

The improvements you need to make to add home value

Installing a shiny new bathroom or a spacious loft conversion is an expensive project, but could be worth your while when you come to sell your property



CRUCIAL: A modern bathroom could make all the difference

By Tom Pyman

Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

HOME improvements can be an expensive and arduous task, but the long-term benefits, in terms of the value it can add to your property, are likely to make it all worthwhile.

Of course, it's not all about adding value - a shiny new bathroom or kitchen, or spacious loft conversion can make your current house even more homely, particularly when you make your own personal stamp on the design.

Here we've compiled the five best improvements which can make your home both nicer to live in, and more attractive to buyers when you come to sell.

1. Adding space is one of the best ways to improve your home and increase its value.

If you've outgrown your home and can make it bigger by building an extension or converting the loft, cellar or garage, doing the work is often more economical than moving to a larger property.

Plus, it gives you a chance to create space tailored to your needs. However, be careful not to extend your home in the wrong way.

For example, if you're converting the loft to create an extra bedroom and there isn't enough living space downstairs for the total number of bedrooms, you'll be making the house too top heavy.

If you're concerned about resale, ask local estate agents whether the work you're considering is advisable.

2. Modernising a home stuck in a different decade is always going to add value and make it nicer to live in.

Central heating is a key home improvement because most of us want it, but installing it is expensive and disruptive, so it's something to do at

ROOMY: Adding space is one of the best ways to improve your home



an early stage of a renovation.

The same applies to rewiring - old wiring isn't always obvious, but it can be dangerous.

Having a property rewired is also expensive and disruptive and can create more work and expense because you often have to replaster afterwards.



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3. It's often said that kitchens and bathrooms sell homes, mainly because updating them is costly and it's not easy being without either while the work's being done.

Day to day, replacing a dated kitchen or bathroom with a modern one will make a big difference to your life, and you can fit a new one inexpen-

sively, although it's not hard to spend a lot.

If you're able to create one, an open-plan kitchen-diner/family room is the most popular type of kitchen these days, as it's ideal for family life and entertaining.

4. En suite bathrooms and shower rooms are another good way to add

value and make your home life easier.

You should have at least one bathroom for every three bedrooms, but when everyone's getting ready in the morning, there can be a lot of pressure on that bathroom.

This is when an en suite is very handy. It's also useful to have a bathroom or shower room on every floor

where there are bedrooms, so, for example, a loft-conversion bedroom with an en suite is usually more useful and valuable than one without.

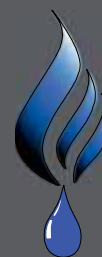
5. In places where parking space is limited, off-street parking is a big plus and most likely to add value in expensive urban areas.

You may need planning permission

for off-street parking and for a dropped kerb (to access the off-street parking easily), although the former can often be done without planning permission if you use permeable materials or have other drainage - see the interactive house online at www.planningportal.gov.uk or ask your local council.

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Return of Ramblin' Man Fair lights up dreary county town

Despite torrential downpours on Saturday, which cancelled festivals elsewhere in the country, the show had to go on in Maidstone, as **Adam Aitken** reports



HEADLINERS: Texas rockers ZZ Top proved a hit with crowds

WITH the Download festival becoming heavier each year, there's been an opening for an event focusing more on classic rock. And in its third year, Ramblin' Man Fair has made that role its own.

Now expanded to three nights, there's a stellar line-up, with rock, prog, country and blues brilliantly represented.

A special mention needs to be made of the Rising Stage, dedicated to up-and-coming bands. There's no filler here and a festival comprising just these bands would be worth visiting in itself. Screaming Eagles, Bad Touch and Skam are just three that look destined for bigger things.

At the other end of the spectrum, the main-stage headliners each have their own niches. Saxon, who play on Friday, deliver a blistering set that shows why they are one of the great survivors of the New Wave of British Heavy Metal.

By the time the gates open on Saturday, it appears that earlier confidence it would be a dry weekend was

wide of the mark.

It means the beer tents are crowded for much of the day, and that brings us to one of the gripes heard around the site.

The price of beer – an important factor for many – is a nuisance, with most pints costing £5.20.

It's not excessively expensive by festival standards, but staff and punters alike quickly get fed up with handing over fistfuls of change or rooting around for another 20p. Make it a nice round fiver and everyone would be much happier.

Another annoyance for many is the decision to brand the Friday night as a spin-off festival.

'Weekend tickets' allow entry for Saturday and Sunday only, meaning a separate ticket needs to be bought for Friday at the Fair.

It's the same with the merchandise – if you want a memento with all three days' line-ups, you need to buy two T-shirts.

These gripes are a shame, because in every other way this weekend is a triumph.

There's unlikely to be a friendlier

festival on the circuit, bar staff and stewards are helpful and good-natured throughout, and the sound is great on all four stages.

Extreme, who headline on Saturday, might be pooh-poohed by some, but they do what they do well. Lead singer Gary Cherone prowls around the stage and lead guitarist Nuno Bettencourt is another showman. While



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POPULAR: Ramblin' Man Fair attracted fans of all ages despite horrible weather on the Saturday. All photos by Chris White and Andy Archer

purists might prefer last night's Saxon, Extreme literally get the funk out and don't pretend to be anything they're not.

It's impossible to take everyone in, and there are inevitably some clashes that involve deciding which acts to skip. Monster Truck and Black Star Riders are both at the top of their game, while Devin Townsend Project,

on the prog stage, follow up their amazing Download performance with another startling show.

Meanwhile, a couple of acts are dealt curveballs at the last moment. Y&T play on Friday without John Nyman, who was too ill to fly over for the US.

Although they get some help from a stand-in guitarist who manfully

plugs some of the gap, much of the time they play as a trio – for the first time in the band's 43-year history.

And on Saturday, Dan Baird & Homemade Sin take to the stage without Baird himself, who's in hospital with leukaemia.

The remaining trio take this in their stride, and Warner E Hodges is a consummate pro as he takes over

lead vocals and carries it off superbly.

For many, though, the weekend is all about ZZ Top. Extreme might have put on a show but these Texans are surely going to let the music do the talking on Sunday night.

But they are not at their best. In some ways, it's refreshing they keep it simple – they don't even have a back-drop – but they seem uninterested at

times and there's little interaction with the crowd.

The songs are all classics but it gets a bit stale in the middle of the set.

Hits such as Sharp Dressed Man and Legs spice things up towards the end, but their prompt departure from the stage without a word to the audience just adds to the feeling that there's something missing.



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Bridal Diary

Guests' budget for the big day

MANY of us will attend a wedding this year - but you could find yourself saying "I do" to a big bill.

The cost of the big day can soon add up. Guests can expect to pay nearly £500, while bridesmaids and ushers can find themselves spending more than £1,000, according to research amongst 2,000 people.

For many guests, the outgoings can start way before the big day itself, with the typical cost of attending a stag or hen do coming to £58, according to the survey from American Express.

Choosing the perfect gift for the happy couple costs £102 on average.

A new outfit will come to £75, while topping it off with hair and beauty treatments costs another £28.

Guests typically spend £94 travelling to a wedding and £74 on a hotel, while a further £48 is spent on average toasting the bride and groom.

This brings the total cost of a wedding guest to £479 on average according to the findings.

If you're lucky enough to be asked to be a bridesmaid, you can expect to spend £1,267, while an usher can expect to pay £1,127.

In a bid to fund the cost of attending a wedding, 44 per cent of guests plan to dip into their monthly salary, 26 per cent will use their savings, while a further 22 per cent expect to put their wedding costs on a credit card.

So if you're planning to attend a wedding, how can you keep the costs down and enjoy the big day without worrying about how it will affect your bank balance?

Here are some tips from American Express:

■ **Personal touch.** Video compilations or framed photo montages can be very meaningful.

■ **Plan ahead.** When gift lists are sent to guests, ensure you're one of the earlier purchasers.

■ **Get renting.** Consider hiring a dress or suit for the weekend. Plenty of companies now offer designer dresses and suits that can be rented at a fraction of the price.

■ **Use your tech.** If you only need a ride from the station to the reception, consider using taxi apps instead of hiring a car. Don't forget to cut costs by car sharing with other wedding guests.

■ **If you do spend, do it wisely.** Take advantage of vouchers and discounts.



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Bridal Diary

The best **rose** picks for a late summer wedding

THE shade of the season, pink is also the colour to sink at this season's weddings. Whether it's the palest blush or a pinkish bronze, still or sparkling, everything's coming up roses.

Here's how to get your pink on...

1. Waitrose Premium Bag-in-Box Wine, Cote Bleu Mediterranean Rose 2016, Provence, France (£12.99)

It's not often a boxed wine makes you want to dive right in, but with an Art Deco-style label that makes a fashion statement, this cube is right on cue.

"Our new pale, dry rose is particularly exciting as it taps into the latest wine trends we're seeing at Waitrose," says Victoria Mason, wine buyer. "Cote Bleu is sourced from specially selected vineyards in the sunny Mediterranean and the box design is contemporary and fun."

2. Lellei Rose 2015, Hungary (£5.49, Lidl)

If you're feeling adventurous, Lidl has thrown open the doors to its largest ever Hungarian

wine cellar and this ripe, fruity rose will keep you scurrying back for more.

A pinot noir rose that demonstrates the quality of wine Hungary can produce.

3. 16 Little Black Pigs Rose 2016, South Australia (£7.99, Virgin Wines)

An appealing deep salmon pink, this is a vibrant and winey style of rose with dried cherry and savoury berry fruits that are accented by fine tannins and a fresh, grippy palate.

Vivid and engaging, the juicy finish lends plenty of freshness to this food-friendly rose.

4. Cune Monopole Rose 2015, Rioja, Spain (£9.95, Vino Wine Shop)

Quite distinctive, this delightful strawberry blonde is a blend of viura and tempranillo and it's ripe, fruity and utterly delicious.

Pure and well rounded with aromas of apricot and peach, the balanced flavours of strawberry and raspberry fruits radiate a

drink-me-now freshness.

5. Chapel Down English Rose 2016, Kent (£10, Sainsbury's)

Home-grown rose is on the rise and this bronze beauty has faint aromas of wild strawberries with dried berry and currant flavours, plenty of herbal notes, and fresh acidity offers an appealing tang on the finish.

6. Mirabeau La Folie Sparkling Rose, Provence, France (£12.99, Waitrose)

If you're in the throes of a summer romance with Mirabeau, it could get even more lush.

The same producer has just released this stunning sparkler which displays the same beautiful ballet-pink hue, but with the added allure of tiny beads of bubbles.

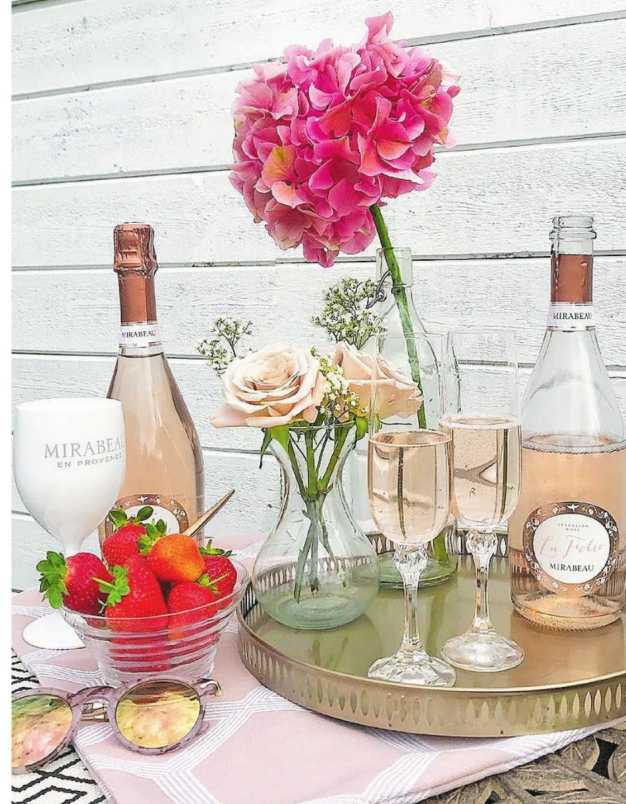
7. Ramon Bilbao Lalomba Rosado 2016, Spain (£17.50, Great Western Wine)

Showing the serious side of rose, this is a complex, rose-gold gem that's dressed in a handsome bottle and sealed with a trendy Vinolok glass closure.

Elegant and seamless, there's a plushness to the ripe, peachy stone fruits.



MIRABEAU LA FOLIE
SPARKLING ROSE, PRO-
VENCE, FRANCE, AVAIL-
ABLE FROM WAITROSE
PICTURE: PA



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SUPPORTED: Thanet District Council has thrown its weight behind the announcement of the new festival

2018 festival set to celebrate history of Royal Harbour

Kent's coastal and maritime history will be championed next summer

THANET'S tourism and leisure sectors have received a significant boost after bosses announced a three-day extravaganza celebrating the history of Ramsgate's Royal Harbour will be taking place in the district next summer.

The Royal Harbour History Festival (RHHF) is set to welcome huge crowds between June 15 and 17 in Ramsgate next year.

The festival's vision is to create a 'destination history' event with four main interlocking aims: to showcase Kent's coastal and maritime history; to provide an educational experience for younger generations; and to bring people into east Kent to enjoy its local history and cultural air, sea and land inheritance and to raise money for local charities supporting both edu-

cation and heritage regenerations.

The festival has the backing of both Thanet District Council and Visit Kent, along with the support of the Lord Lieutenant's office, the Royal Navy, the RNLI, The Cinque Ports Confederation, the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships, University of Kent, Landmark Trust and many other cultural organisations.

Councillor Hunter Stummer-Schmertzling, cabinet member for regeneration and enterprise services at Thanet District Council, said: "Our coastline is central to British history and we are delighted to be supporting The Royal Harbour History Festival 2018.

"The three-day extravaganza will celebrate our local history with a high profile programme of events and community engagement activities."

Rob Kenyon, community devel-

opment officer, Thanet District Council, added: "Thanet is the fastest growing tourism destination in the UK and Ramsgate is the ideal location for those looking for rich maritime history, continental charm, first class entertainment and beautiful architecture.

"This festival will give visitors yet another reason to come and enjoy England's only Royal Harbour.

"There is such a feel-good factor in Ramsgate at the moment, having just been named as one of ten Heritage Action Zones in the country by Historic England and with the opening of the Grade II-listed The Royal Victoria Pavilion just around the corner."

Sandra Matthews-Marsh MBE, chief executive Visit Kent, said: "The Royal Harbour History Festival is the centrepiece of a collective campaign to spotlight the extraor-

inary stories that are part of Kent's maritime history. History and heritage are strongly associated with Britain's holiday offer with 81 per cent of overseas visitors stating it was their main reason for going beyond London."

The festival is the brainchild of brother and sister team James Thomas, director at the Royal Harbour Hotel and Victoria Nielson, chairman RHHF.

The festival will be a combination of a ticketed events and a free to public events.

Ms Nielson said: "It will focus on nine history modules, each with a dedicated location. The programme includes lectures, debates, displays, living history and interactive experiences."

Tickets will go on sale early next year and can be purchased on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Mining museum opening next year gains over 500 artifacts

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

THE Kent Mining Museum, due to open at Betteshanger Park near Deal in 2018, have become custodians of over 500 artefacts relating to the history of the Kent Coalfield.

The collection, on loan from Dover Museum, includes mining workwear, signage, equipment and ephemera and will form part of the museum displays and its research archive.

The collection move comes after the museum recently completed its storeroom. With new environmental monitoring equipment, funded by a donation from the Association of Independent Museums, the Kent Mining Museum is able to care for and help preserve items relating to its mining heritage.

Darran Cowd, museum and heritage manager, said: "To be asked to take care of this substantial collection is a big vote of confidence for the Kent Mining Museum."

"Many of the items will form parts of the displays when we open the doors to the museum next year. There are deep links between



BORROWED: Some artefacts have come from Dover Museum

the coalfield and the wider communities of the Dover area and we continue to work closely with Dover Museum to collect and promote the heritage of the area."

Jon Iveson and Dr Lynda Pearce of Dover Museum facilitated the loan and made their own knowledge of the coalfield available to the museum project.

The museum is actively looking for further stories and items about

the Kent Coalfield.

If anyone has something, a badge, books, photographs, Davy lamp, tools or a grandparent's diary telling of their journey to Kent, the team are asking you to get in touch.

The Kent Mining Heritage Foundation (KMHF) is a registered charity working in partnership with Betteshanger Park, Hadlow Group, Aylesham and Elvington

and Eythorne Heritage Centres to collect, care and promote East Kent's coal mining heritage.

From the outset The Betteshanger Project has been working towards a fundraising target of £1.8m. Through the work of the Kent Mining Heritage Foundation's Development Group the project has received unprecedented support but still currently faces a £0.9m funding gap.

Town sets stage's scene

GRAVESEND resident, Sukh Ojla is presenting a small-scale production, *Pyar Actually*, at the town's Woodville Theatre from September 29 to October 1.

For more information and tickets visit woodville.com



Undercover at seafront

THERE'S just one month to go until Undercover Festival takes over Margate's Dreamland.

Festival organiser Mick Moriarty has said it'll be the "best so far" when Tom Robinson and his band take to the seafront stage.

For tickets to the festival, taking place September 8-9, visit undercoverfest.com.

Midsummer productions

CANTERBURY Shakespeare Festival is currently taking place and will finish on August 20.

Most productions, including *Julius Caesar*, are free entry.

Visit the website at canterburysakespeare.com



Another person's voice

IMPERSONATOR James Hurn is bringing his show *Hancock's Half Hour*, *One Man, Many Voices* to Bromley's Churchill Theatre on September 8.

His impressions include Keith Williams, Sid James, and Tony Hancock.

For tickets visit churchilltheatre.co.uk

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Junior group runners

A LINE of 2km junior parkruns have been launched in the Tonbridge and Malling area, taking place on Sundays from 9am.

Visit parkrun.org.uk to register and find locations.



Railway Children on stage

A PRODUCTION of the classic book, The Railway Children, is heading to Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre from August 15-19.

Tickets for the show are on sale now priced from £22.25 to £33.25, available from marlowetheatre.com or the box office on 01227 787787.

Full cast joining Vickers

SON of a Preacher Man is coming to Bromley's Churchill Theatre on September 4.

Joining Diana Vickers are Debra Stephenson and Ian Reddington.

Visit churchilltheatre.co.uk



Film uses local students

STUDENTS at The Folkestone Academy are to appear in a film created by Folkestone resident and actress Jessica Hynes.

The star used classrooms and performing arts students when directing her film, The Fight. Students worked with Sally Phillips and Noel Clarke during filming.

Kite flyers to assemble for festival anniversary

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

KITE flyers will want to assemble near Maidstone next week for the 30th anniversary of the Teston Kite Festival.

The oldest festival of its type in the county will be taking place over the weekend of August 12-13 at Teston Bridge Country Park.

It started in 1987 when the park rangers saw a need for events at the park and approached some kite flyers from Blackheath and asked them to demonstrate kite flying for other members of the public.

From this small beginning it has become one of the most popular festivals amongst kite flyers all over the south east of England, with many of them camping in the location so they can spend the full weekend.

For most of the 30 years rangers had worked in partnership with Ron Dell, one of the original Blackheath Flyers, to organise the event. Ron eventually handed over his responsibility to Kent Kite Flyers in 2010, and in February 2014 passed away. A memorial bench



for Ron, who travelled to kite festivals all over the country, will be at the festival this year, for all visitors to see.

The Teston Kite Festival is unique compared to other events of its kind, because it has no arena fencing the display kites, allowing the public to walk amongst kite flyers, ask questions, and even take the chance to fly some of them.

A spokesperson for the festival, said: "All the kite flyers are happy to share the love of flying and to

help the people having problems flying your own kites.

"This is not an event where demonstrations take place, but a relaxing day out where people who love flying kites share a passion with all those around them."

Visitors are advised to bring a picnic with them, and car parking is available at a charge.

Camping is available for £10 per pitch from the Friday to Monday.

For more information contact Malcolm Ford on 07840086770.



ARTISTIC: Some of the kites are made to look like birds



UNIQUE: Visitors will be able to see a range of different kites

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'Gardening is form of mental health therapy'

Horticultural therapy charity Thrive offers tips on how to make your garden a wellbeing haven...

EVER thought how much a garden might be able to help a loved one suffering from mental health problems, whether it's an elderly relative showing signs of dementia or a traumatised child?

Former city finance worker Faith Ramsay, new chair of trustees at horticulture therapy charity Thrive, left her lucrative job to re-train as a garden designer and in the process alleviated her own bouts of depression.

She explains: "Thrive therapists use horticulture to achieve a therapeutic outcome. Different plants help alleviate different problems."

Here, she offers tips on plants to include in a variety of therapeutic garden schemes:

1. Lavender

Faith says: "It's calming, balances the senses and has a sedative quality which can aid sleep. Being surrounded by lavender and the natural smell of it is very good. It's also robust and will keep coming back. It doesn't need much care or watering."

How to use it:

"If you've had an emotionally traumatic moment, lavender is deliberately used as an entry way that is subliminally very calming."

2. Rosemary

"It helps memory and is very good for dementia settings," she says. "It's a stimulating plant for dealing with people who might be feeling low and need a bit of a boost. I wouldn't have lavender and rosemary cheek by jowl."



ADVICE: Faith Ramsay

There needs to be space for calming and space for being uplifted. "

How to use it:

"I'd plant rosemary near a kitchen, or, if the person has a greenhouse, a washing line or a pond, where you expect them to be slightly more active, it can help them feel uplifted."

3. Thyme

"This is particularly good for children with mental capacity issues because they can touch and grab and smell and interact with it in a positive way. If you are constantly being told not to touch or poke things, suddenly being able to do that is very positive and empowering."

4. Early spring-flowering bulbs

"For many people, mental health problems, are worse in the winter. I

would choose an early spring-flowering bulb for a sense of optimism, to give the message that positive things are coming.

5. Childhood plants

"If you are dealing with an elderly person, maybe someone who is starting to suffer from dementia, include plants which were around during their childhood, like old-fashioned pinks, which are very aromatic, or sweet peas, because those memories are lost last.

"They lose their newer memories quicker. These aromatic, old-fashioned plants may strike a chord with people in their seventies and eighties, which echo something from their childhood. You should avoid plants that need a lot of TLC though."

We Are The Tribute

KILLER Queen will be performing on stage at Tunbridge Wells' Assembly Hall Theatre on October 21.

The band have been singing together since 1993, and have sold-out stages from the UK to Moscow.

They're fronted by Patrick Myers as Freddie Mercury who sang on Pat Boy Slim's record The Real Life.

For tickets visit assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk

Welcome to the 60s

STEP back in time to the golden era of music with Lipstick On Your Collar coming to Maidstone's Hazlitt Theatre on September 14.

The show is packed full of hits from Connie Francis, Breda Lee, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, The Beatles, The Ronettes, Cliff Rochard, Cilla Black and more.

All music is performed by a live band.

For tickets visit parkwoodtheatres.co.uk

A devilish good time

COMEDIAN, and previous pantomime resident, Joe Pasquale is bringing his show Devil In Disguise to Dartford's Orchard Theatre on August 20.

We all have a good side and a dark side, and a backside, and Joe plans to show off all three.

The show is suitable for all ages.

For more information and tickets visit orchardtheatre.co.uk

Show's Got Tonight

LULU and her All About The Music tour will be stopping at Margate's Winter Gardens on October 5.

The singer will be delivering a show packed full of her hits, new songs, and songs that have influenced and guided her throughout her career.

She states it'll be her "biggest tour yet".

For more information and tickets visit margatewintergardens.co.uk

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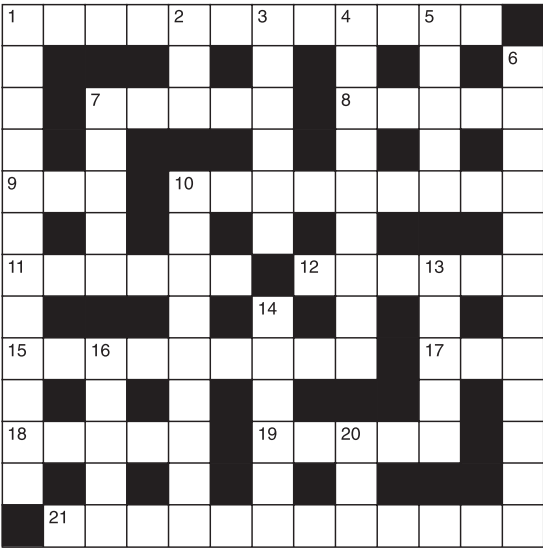


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DOUBLE CROSSWORD



Quick

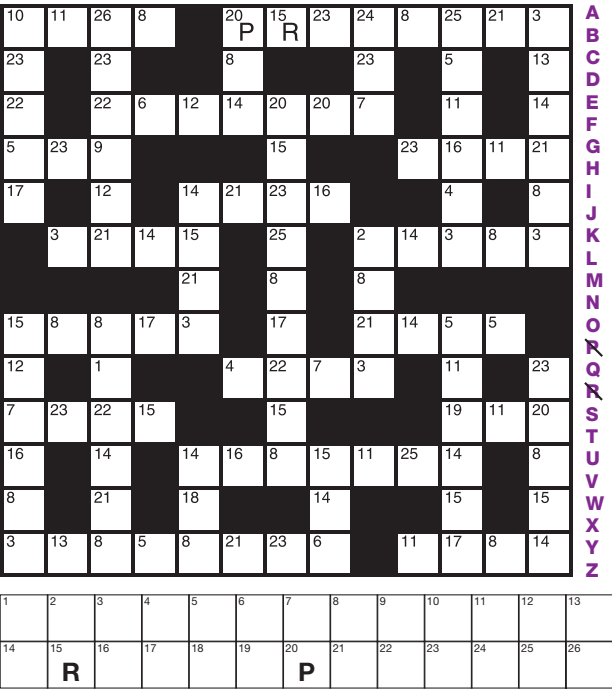
- Across**
- 1. Peerless (12)
 - 7. Dissuade (5)
 - 8. Amulet (5)
 - 9. Observe (3)
 - 10. Right (9)
 - 11. Dislike (6)
 - 12. Discard (6)
 - 15. Handling (9)
 - 17. Manage (3)
 - 18. Frequently (5)
 - 19. Insinuate (5)
 - 21. Freedom (12)
- Down**
- 1. Drawing (12)
 - 2. Rug (3)
 - 3. Skilful (6)
 - 4. Designer (9)
 - 5. Depart (5)
 - 6. Impudence (12)
 - 7. Attire (5)
 - 10. Contrition (9)
 - 13. Premature (5)
 - 14. Determine (6)
 - 16. Consumed (5)
 - 20. Cushion (3)

Cryptic

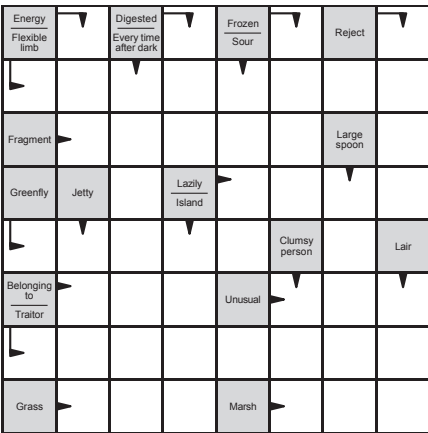
- Across**
- 1. On one's own but having unmarried workers? (6,6)
 - 7. Kingly backing for drink (5)
 - 8. Annoy 17 with directions (5)
 - 9. Aim at the last moment (3)
 - 10. Shady dealer playing tennis? (9)
 - 11. Finish in attempt to be fashionable (6)
 - 12. The dog made a meal of the cleric! (6)
 - 15. Farm hen is used by angler (9)
 - 17. Beverage made from chocolate and coffee (3)
 - 18. Concerning a boxing match (5)
 - 19. Following nearer the back (5)
 - 21. Hush-hush striker (6,6)
- Down**
- 1. What he learns is legal, of course (7,2,3)
 - 2. Limb of learner, for example (3)
 - 3. He has a chore to sort out (6)
 - 4. Fail to get the ball back at tennis, but still show clear profit (3,6)
 - 5. Rub out part of the answer as erroneous (5)
 - 6. Close relative isn't far from the story (4,8)
 - 7. Boy takes the French spoon (5)
 - 10. The compiler is a Communist - the dog! (3,6)
 - 13. Rat is on the move (5)
 - 14. Make known that I am to have a role (6)
 - 16. Talked of part of a wheel (5)
 - 20. Going East on foot, perhaps (3)

CODEWORD

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.



Arrowword

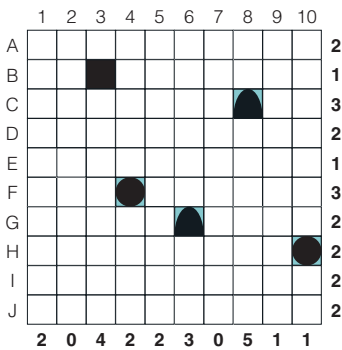


Enter your answers in the direction indicated by the arrows.

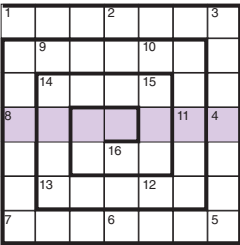
Battleships

Find where ships shown below are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some of the squares have been filled to start you off.

THE FLEET
1 x Battleship
2 x Cruiser
3 x Destroyer
4 x Submarine



Word Spiral

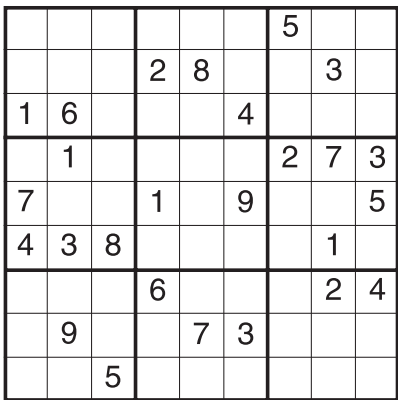


Starting from 1, fill in the grid clockwise with four-letter words. The last letter of each word becomes the first letter of the next to reveal the key word in the shaded boxes.

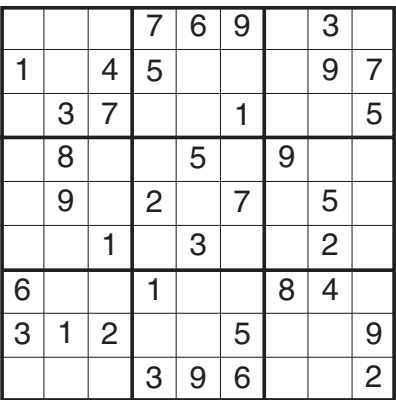
- 1. Vend
 - 2. Ear part
 - 3. Public school
 - 4. Sheltered place
 - 5. Pavement edge
 - 6. Carry
 - 7. Moneyed
 - 8. Circular band
 - 9. Poke
 - 10. Information
 - 11. Slightly open
 - 12. Tear
 - 13. Far down
 - 14. Knitting stitch
 - 15. Speech defect
 - 16. Go by
- Keyword clue:** A coarse fabric

SUDOKU

Hard



Easy



Solutions

Double Crossword

Cryptic

Down: 1 Illustration; 2 Mat; 3 Adroit; 4 Archibute; 5 Leave; 6 Imperitence; 7 Dress; 10 Penitence; 13 Early; 14 Decide; 16 Eaten; 20 Pad.

Code word

Across: 1 = Q, 2 = Y, 3 = S, 4 = B, 5 = L, 6 = N, 7 = Y, 8 = E, 9 = G, 10 = W, 11 = I, 12 = H, 13 = K, 14 = A, 15 = M, 16 = D, 17 = P, 18 = X, 19 = Z, 20 = P, 21 = T, 22 = U, 23 = O, 24 = J, 25 = C, 26 = F.

Word Spiral

Across: 1 Sell; 2 Love; 3 Eton; 4 Nook; 5 Kerb; 6 Bear; 7 Rich; 8 Hoop; 9 Prod; 10 Data; 11 Ajar; 12 Deter; 8 Charm; 9 Incomparable; 10 Privilege; 11 Present; 12 Reject; 13 Treat; 14 Imply; 15 Run; 16 Pass.

Keyword: Hessian

Sudoku - Easy

Sudoku - Hard

Battleships

Arrowword

Double Crossword

Cryptic

Across: 1 Single handed; 7 Lager; 8 Tease; 9 End; 10 Rackeater; 11 Trendy; 12 Curate; 15 Fisherman; 17 Tea; 18 About; 19 After; 21 Secret weapon.

Down: 1 Student of law; 2 Leg; 3 Horace; 4 Net return; 5 Erase; 6 Near relation; 7 Ladder; 10 Fed setter; 13 Aslin; 14 Impact; 16 Spoke; 20 Toe.

Quick

Across: 1 Spoke; 2 Toe; 3 Aslin; 14 Impact; 16 Spoke; 20 Toe.

Down: 1 Spoke; 2 Toe; 3 Aslin; 14 Impact; 16 Spoke; 20 Toe.

5 reasons to do Center Parcs abroad

1 You won't have to bankrupt yourself to give the kids a good time

If you have looked at booking a holiday in Center Parcs with the children, you will have no doubt baulked at the price. Online last week a midweek break at Center Parcs in the UK (eg at Elveden, Norfolk) cost around £1200-£1300 in mid August. But if you go to De Kemperveen in the Netherlands for the same period, it will cost you just 849 euros (just over £750) – plus, the children will get to experience another country.

A number of other Dutch Center Parcs, eg De Vossemeren and De Eemhof are also available for less than £1000. Check out www.centreparks.com for details.

Families can also book their ferry and accommodation through Stena Line in one go, saving up to 20% on the overall price via: www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry-to-holland/book-hotels/center-parcs

2. Your children will get to experience something new

If you haven't tried taking your kids on holiday abroad yet, Center Parcs is a great first step – and even if you have, as soon as you mention the activities on offer, you will have difficulty persuading them of how

Taking the children to a Netherlands' Center Parcs via Stena Line has many advantages for a family on a budget. **Liz Nice** lists some of them...

'educational' they will find a trip to the galleries of Paris or the museums of Berlin. There are nine Center Parcs resorts in Holland - in fact the Center Parcs movement began here. Some examples: Center Parcs Por Zelande offers family paintballing (not easy to get in the UK for under-11s) as well as climbing, bowling, football, canoeing and cycling. Center Parcs Zandvoort has an indoor subtropical water jungle, a trampoline park and even an Aqua Cinema. Center Parcs De Eemhof, set on Lake Eemmeer, offers windsurfing, sailing, canoeing and cycling. Center Parcs Aqua Mundo wave pool and you can even learn how to surf on the Flow Rider. With this lot on offer, you may as well forget having a 'culture' holiday ever again.

3. You can take the dog - and the kids will be happy before you even get there!

Stena Line goes from Harwich and the spacious family cabins are so

comfortable you won't want to get off when you get to the Hook of Holland. All the cabins have flatscreen TVs and en-suite facilities – not that this matters much. The children get to sleep in A CABIN and have the run of 11 DECKS. As far as they are concerned, their holiday is made. The ship also offers an a la carte restaurant, a children's play area, video games, an onboard cinema and even a basketball court. You can also take your dog along – Stena Line ships have onboard kennels with 'kennel cam'. Holland is known for being a dog-friendly nation and a number of the Center Parc resorts welcome dogs. Check the website for details.

4. Going by ferry makes life so much easier – and no arguments about what to bring

Yes, you have to drive, but all you have to do is pack up the car and go. There are no luggage restrictions and those silly toys the kids insist they can't do without, can actually



come. It makes packing so much easier. Although the Center Parcs package is a brilliant option, the Hook of Holland is also within easy driving of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Delft so a city break – and culture – is another possibility. (Or why not do both?)

5. Adults are understood

The great thing about Center Parcs is that while children are more than catered for with swimming, cycling, and a wide variety of other sporting delights, there is also great care taken to ensure that adults get to

relax as well. Saunas and massages are good value too. You've earned it.

■ How to get there

There are three Center Parcs within easy reach of the Hook of Holland. De Eemhof, Port Zelande and Parc Zandvoort. Prices start from £490 for four nights (Mon – Friday) and from £507 for a 3 night stay Fri- Monday for two adults and two children, including return day ferry crossings with a car. Stena Line offers twice-daily daytime and overnight crossings. Find out more on stenaline.co.uk/ferry-to-holland/book-hotels/center-parcs

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If you would like to participate by post please write to:
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Please include your name and
 address, although these will be
 withheld in exceptional
 circumstances, and a daytime
 phone number for verification
 (this will not be published). We
 reserve the right to edit all letters.

Crossbows are fun not danger

YOU recently had a short article in
 KoS regarding a warning about mini
 crossbows.

I would like to report seeing some
 of these items on sale in Hobbies in
 Dover.

They are often bought by parents
 for their children's entertainment in
 the garden, firing at targets,
 competing against each other. They
 are supplied in cardboard and
 polystyrene boxes, with safety
 information printed thereon.

So one child in China is injured!
 Maybe he or she could not read the
 safety instructions?

While I regret any injury to any
 child, I do not see any reason for a
 nationwide alert for information on
 these mini crossbows.

There will probably be gasps of
 horror when I tell you Hobbies also
 sells knives, swords, archery bows
 and arrows and fishing tackle and
 that our main customers are parents
 buying for birthdays or for use in the
 holidays.

Frank Davies,
 Hobbies, Dover

Dunkirk film is a great success

I FEEL that I must write in defence of
 the film Dunkirk, which Brian
 Richardson criticises [KoS, letters,
 last week].

My wife and I have visited the
 cinema once or twice a week for
 many years, and we agreed that this
 was one of the best films we have
 seen for sometime. It was perhaps
 indicative of its appeal that, unusu-
 ally, two screenings at the Odeon
 were sold out, and we only managed
 to obtain a couple of the last tickets
 available at the time we visited.

The film was both moving and
 exciting, despite the fact that
 obviously we knew its outcome.

The limited dialogue was appropri-
 ate, as the images spoke for themselves.

Mr Richardson claims that the
 involvement of the RAF was over-
 stated but, as Churchill made clear,
 the fact that the troops on the beaches
 did not see the aerial dogfights gave
 them a false impression, as our pilots
 fought valiantly against the Luft-
 waffe, preventing even more disrup-
 tion to the evacuation.

I realise that the film would not
 appeal to those who share the
 opinions of the liberals of north
 London, as it was immensely
 patriotic, and provoked feelings of
 great pride in what our parents'
 generation achieved in standing up
 to the barbarism of the Germans,
 whose viewpoint is not required
 when telling the true story of their
 failures.

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Women's sport finally getting recognition

I WAS delighted to see this paper
 recognise the achievements of
 England's (and of course Kent's)
 fantastic women's cricket team in its
 news pages last weekend.

For too long women's sport has
 been almost completely ignored by
 the mainstream media, despite the
 fact it has been making rapid strides
 and general interest is at, I would
 suspect, an all-time high.

Certainly the crowds at Lord's
 suggested that it is experiencing a
 boom in popularity.

Likewise, the exploits of the
 women's football team at the
 European Championships in the
 Netherlands over the past few weeks
 is something that should be
 championed at every opportunity,
 particularly how poorly the men's
 side have generally performed since
 the turn of the century.

The hope, as these players
 themselves have expressed, is that it
 will encourage more young girls
 into sport, and that legacy we all
 hoped to achieve by hosting the

Olympics in 2012 can truly be
 delivered.

People are unquestionably more
 engaged with female sport and it
 was heartwarming to see Andy
 Murray correct that reporter during
 Wimbledon, pointing out that Sam
 Querrey was the first "male" US
 player to reach a major semi-final
 since 2009.

Ironically, of course, it could be
 argued there is inequality towards
 the male players in tennis, as they
 receive the same prize money as
 their female counterparts, despite
 playing several more hours over the
 course of the competition.

Whether women's sport will ever
 attract the same attention and
 interest as the men's World Cup, for
 instance, I'm not sure, but seeing
 Tammy Beaumont and the rest of
 the team finally getting some real
 recognition is undoubtedly a big
 step forward, and I hope to see that
 continue in the years to come.

J Doggett,
 from Sittingbourne

Certainly it was well received in
 the cinema, even the usual talkers
 being silenced by the action, while
 all those I have spoken to who saw it
 felt as we did.

Colin Bullen,
 Tonbridge

Movie delivers non-stop action

IN reply to Mr Richardson, I've just
 seen the film Dunkirk and it was
 wonderful.

The director chose to focus on a
 few tragic hours to show the

emotional connection during battle
 and the individuals struggle to
 survive.

I think we've seen enough old
 films to work out the strategy of
 Second World War battles. I was
 moved by the intensity portrayed
 and I respect all the veterans. The
 actors did it justice.

Julie Morrison,
 Ashford

Gull attacks are not cause for cull

DURING the summer period, there

are always alarmist stories of gulls
 'attacking' people - which inevitably
 lead to calls to cull them.

The holiday period coincides with
 the birds' breeding season and, being
 such fierce defenders of their
 offspring, the birds may occasionally
 become aggressive in order to see off
 any perceived threat to their nest
 and children. These 'attacks' are
 usually exaggerated by the media
 and are very rare indeed.

To cull wild animals for protecting
 their babies is nothing short of
 ludicrous.

Despite this, if gulls are causing
 issues, there are a number of
 effective, humane methods of
 deterrence that can be used to
 discourage birds from nesting on flat
 roofs or chimneys, or from rummag-
 ing in our rubbish. Animal Aid has
 free advice sheets that detail the
 number of humane, non-lethal
 methods of deterrence available.

In any case, we should show
 tolerance to these birds, not least
 because they are just being good
 parents, and six of the seven gull
 species are in decline.

Tod Bradbury,
 Animal Aid, Tonbridge

Anti-vehicle plan will hit the poor

THE last three mayors of London,
 including the current one, Sadiq
 Khan, have been totally anti-car.

Consequently they have taken
 massive amounts of road space away
 with bus or cycle lanes, widened
 pavements to reduce road widths,
 re-phased traffic lights to hold up
 traffic, general traffic calming,
 installed millions of pollution
 causing road humps, 20mph limits
 and so on, all to make driving as
 costly, frustrating, time wasting and
 unpleasant as possible.

Now the government think they
 have been 'successful' in London,
 they see fit to roll-out similar
 schemes to the provinces and is
 giving away £255 million to councils
 to bring this charade to town near
 you [KoS, last week].

Pollution scare stories, claiming
 thousands are dying of air pollution,
 solely from road transport are the
 basis for this attack on people's
 mobility.

Of course this will be done on
 price, like road charging, toxicity
 taxes, workplace parking taxes (like
 many NHS staff endure already),
 higher taxes on diesel vehicles, even
 though they produce less CO2 and
 are far better at conserving fuel.

This will hit the poorer, lower paid,
 vulnerable members of society, but is
 still supported by all the major
 political parties.

Terry Hudson,
 Whitstable

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the
 best service to you, we have produced our 10
 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division
 between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively
 criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise
 broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are
 important to the well-being of the county and
 its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



St Lawrence Ground in Canterbury
by **Ernie Jordan** from **Margate**

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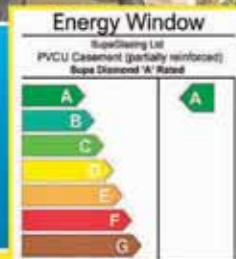
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TRANSFORMED: All-new Peugeot 5008 is a spacious, seven-seater sport utility vehicle rather than a compact traditional people-carrier. Pictures: Peugeot



Peugeot reinvents 5008 as spacious seven-seater

WITH sales of sport utility vehicles soaring, Peugeot has reinvented the 5008 as a large seven-seater SUV rather than a compact multi-purpose vehicle.

The new contender in this growing market goes on sale in autumn and is claimed to offer modularity on a par with that of the best people-carriers.

The 2.84m wheelbase of the new 5008 SUV makes this new C-segment SUV easy to live with. At a compact 4.64m, it's 19cm longer than the latest 3008 SUV and 11cm longer than the original 5008 multi-purpose vehicle but is still one of the most conservatively proportioned and its extra length makes it roomier for passengers.

An innovative configuration sees three matching, separate, folding seats in the second row, adjustable in length and inclination.

Inside, the driver's environment features newest version of the innovative, almost futuristic, i-Cockpit with a compact steering wheel, a large eight-inch touchscreen dashboard and a 12.3in high-resolution digital head-up display.

The all-new 5008 SUV, like the 308 and 3008 SUV, uses the Efficient Modular Platform 2 (EMP2) and the very latest Euro 6 turbo petrol or diesel engines with CO₂ emissions from 117g/km for



petrol and 108g/km for diesel.

Petrol units are 130hp, three-cylinder 1.2-litre and 165hp, four-cylinder 1.6-litre. On the BlueHDi diesel front are 100 and 120hp 1.6-litre and 150 and 180hp 2.0-litre units.

A six-speed automatic gearbox is optional on 1.2-litre PureTech petrol and 120hp 1.6-litre

diesel and standard with 1.6-litre petrol and 180hp 2.0-litre diesel. Cutting-edge features include advanced grip control with hill descent control, automatic emergency braking, distance alert, lane keep assist, auto high beam, speed sign recognition, adaptive cruise control, blind-spot monitoring and park assist.



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*Renault Finance, PO Box 149, Watford, WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Indemnities may be required. UK residents (excl. Channel Islands) and over 18s only. Requires minimum deposit of 25% on All-New KOLEOS. †The service plan must be carried out in line with the manufacturer's servicing requirements, it cannot be transferred and does not cover wear-and-tear items, such as tyres, brakes and wipers. Mileage and vehicle age limitations apply. ^To enter the drive of a lifetime competition, book a test drive via renault.co.uk/ultimatetestdrive. Eligible entrants must be aged 22-65. 3-2-1 offer applies to all Renault vehicles (excluding Clio Expression, Twingo & ZOE) when ordered and registered by 30th September 2017. Retail customers only. Participating dealers only. See full terms and conditions at renault.co.uk/321.

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Book a test-drive

Renault makes statement with Koleos

Renault is the latest car-maker to expand its SUV line-up to three models with the launch of the large Koleos. Our motoring editor Andy Russell checks it out

RENAULT has revived the Koleos name for its new large D-segment SUV, a sector with more than 350,000 sales in Europe last year and trebling since 2011 to 140,000 sales in the UK.

It joins Captur, Europe's best-selling B-segment crossover, and popular Kadjar, which shares its underpinnings and running gear with Nissan's Qashqai which dominates the C-segment SUVs, so Koleos has a lot to live up to.

There's two turbo diesels - front-wheel drive 130PS 1.6 dCi with six-speed manual gearbox and all-wheel drive 177PS 2.0 dCi with manual or CVT automatic transmissions, available in Dynamique S Nav and Signature Nav trims.

The auto combination, expected to be the big seller, makes good progress but needs a good prod of the throttle to do so hence only 36 to 40mpg on the test route which included some mild off-road hill-starts to show off the all-wheel drive system with 2WD, auto which sends up to 50% of power to the rear wheels when needed and locked 4WD modes.

The CVT transmission has seven set ratios so can be used manually



and drops 'gears' when kicked down to avoid the big rev rises and engine drone of conventional CVTs.

The ride is firm but comfortable on decent roads but sensitive to poor surfaces, not helped by Signature Nav's 19in wheels while Dynamique

S Nav gets 18in ones.

The Koleos steers well and feels composed through corners but, press on, and body roll becomes noticeable.

Koleos was designed to be a very comfortable five-seater, not a



compromised seven-seater.

A long wheelbase maximises space with legroom for six-footers in the heavily-padded, supportive seats. The doors open wide, to make getting in and out easier, and overlap the sills to stop them getting mucky

Renault Koleos

Price: **from £27,500**

Engine tested: **1,995cc, 177hp, four-cylinder turbo diesel mated to CVT automatic gearbox with seven manual ratios**

Performance: **0-62mph 9.5 seconds; top speed 125mph**

MPG: **Urban 45.6; extra urban 48.7; combined 47.9**

CO2 emissions: **156g/km**

Will it fit in the garage?: **L 4,672mm; W (including door mirrors) 2,063mm; H 1,678mm**

so no dirty clothing.

The 579-litre boot has a sill-level floor, rising to 1,795 litres with the 60/40 rear seat backs folded.

Renault has really raised interior quality with padded plastics, tasteful trim and satin chrome highlights.

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

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Name of deceased: Finch, John Alan
Date of Death: 25th May 2017
Name and Address of person to whom notices of claims are to be given: Gaby Hardwicke, 2 Eversley Road, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex TN40 1EY (Ref: JRF/RJO.FIN114030.001)
Names of Executor or Administrator: John Ernest Finch
Date before which notice of claims must be given (Two month's and one day notice at least to be given): 13th October 2017
2 Eversley Road, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex TN40 1EY
Solicitors for the Executor

LICENSING ACT 2003:

Application for Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Timothy Ernest Watters and Barbara Marie Watters have applied to Canterbury City Council for the GRANT of a Premises Licence to operate the following Regulated Activities:
Supply of Alcohol (on and off the premises) from 11:00hrs to 23:00hrs every day extended to 01:30hrs New Year's Eve only; Late Night Refreshment from 23:00 to 23:30 hrs every day extended to 02:00hrs on New Year's Eve only. Live and Recorded Music and Performance of Dance from 23:00hrs to 01:30hrs on New Year's Eve only, all at the following premises: Thai Orchid, 82 Middle Wall, Whitstable CT5 1BN.
A register of licensing applications can be inspected at www.canterbury.gov.uk/licensing or at Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YW tel. 01227 862000 by appointment with the Licensing Team between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday. Any person wishing to submit representations to this application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by 31/08/2017. The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that their identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

Licensing Act 2003: Notice of Application for a Premises Licence
Notice is hereby given that Chafford Park Limited, has applied to Sevenoaks District Council on the 19th of July 2017 for the grant of a Premises Licence to use the premises known as: Granary Barn, Chafford Park Chafford Lane, Fordcombe Tunbridge Wells TN3 9UR for: The Sale of Alcohol from 12:00hrs to 23:00hrs daily. Any person who wishes to make a representation in relation to this application must give notice in writing of his/her representation by the 22nd of August 2017 stating the grounds for making said representation to: Licensing Partnership, P.O. Box 182 Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1GP. The register and records of applications may be viewed at Sevenoaks District Council, Council Offices Argyle Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1HG office during normal office hours; details are also available via www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/licences and permits. It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application for a premises licence and the maximum fine on being convicted of such an offence is £5000.

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**A2 TRUNK ROAD
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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS**

Notice is hereby given that Highways England Company Limited intends to make an Order on the A2 Trunk Road in the County of Kent, under Section 14(1) (a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 because works are proposed to be executed on the road.

The effect of the Order would be to authorise:-

- the phased overnight closure of:
 - both carriageways of the A2 between Brenley Corner (M2 Junction 7) and Whitfield Roundabout (A256);
 - the slip roads leading to and from the carriageways described in i) above;
 - any side road at junction with the carriageways described in i) above;
 - the dedicated right-turn lanes leading from the carriageways described in i) above; and
 - the gaps between the carriageways described in i) above.
- the 24-hour closure of:
 - any lay-by adjacent to the carriageways described in a) i) above; and
 - the road leading to the coast-bound carriageway of the A2 at Patricbourne Junction (A2050).

These measures would be in the interests of road safety while contractors undertake resurfacing, drainage, lighting, electrical, signage works, bridge joints and all associated works.

It is expected that the work would last for approximately 12 weeks starting on or after Monday 4th September 2017. The overnight closures would take place between 20:00 and 06:00 (maximum period). The Order would come into force on 2 September 2017 and have a maximum duration of eighteen months.

Traffic affected by the closures would be diverted using the A28, A256, A257, A290, A299 and A2050.

The temporary closures and diversion routes would be clearly indicated by traffic signs when they are in operation during the works period.

Access to properties and businesses would be maintained by escort.

M Taylor, an Official of Highways England Co Ltd.
Ref: HE/SE/2017/A2/143

Highways England Company Limited,
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For enquiries, please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 or info@highwaysengland.co.uk
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ARCHANT

Six-time Olympic hero back in Kent

Jason Kenny is at Brands Hatch for Revolve24 in September

Cycling

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

SIX-TIME Olympic champion Jason Kenny will return to Kent next month for a 24-hour cycling endurance event at Brands Hatch.

While Kenny's wife, Laura - a four-time Games champion herself, and the most successful female track cyclist in Olympic history - is heavily pregnant with their first child, the cyclist will be back in the county on September 16-17 for Revolve24.

He will ride in a relay team of four including his uncle and father in law Adrian Trott, Laura's dad.

Revolve24, which this year will host nearly a thousand riders, offers the unique experience of riding on the famous motor circuit's smooth asphalt, in the scenic Kent countryside.

Kenny, who has competed at the Olympics in Beijing, London and Rio, and is riding to raise money for the RNLI, helped launch the event back in 2015 and returned to the track last year, competing as an alternative to having a stag party, prior to his wedding, two weeks later.

Unsurprisingly, Kenny won the event's King of the Mountain title, by climbing the nine per cent gradient Halewoods Hill that bends into the famous Druids Corner in just over 10 seconds.

Speaking this week, he said: "I really enjoy Revolve24. It's a definite challenge - both off the track, trying to look after yourself throughout the weekend, as well as getting stuck in on the track."

"There's a great atmosphere here



CHAMPION: Jason Kenny will be at Brands Hatch next month.
Photo: Edward Thomas Sportive

and it's good fun."

This year Kenny will be riding alongside some other established names in cycling including the professional racing team Bike Channel Canyon, which is offering a professional cycling contract to the winner of the Bike Channel's Pro Coach programme.

Ex-England rugby union player

with five caps for the nation, Duncan Bell, is also taking on this year's challenge while raising money and awareness for the mental health charity HeadSet.

Tickets for the event are available to buy, and riders can register for the 24-, 12- and 6-hour events, as well as the Team Time Trial and Crit at revolve24.com

Martin trusted with Gillingham armband

Football

GILLINGHAM boss Ady Pennock has named Lee Martin as his new captain for the 2017/18 season.

The 30-year-old, who signed for the club last summer, was due to lead the team out prior to kick-off against Doncaster Rovers on Saturday, when the Gills began their League One campaign.

Martin said: "Obviously it's a real honour; I'm delighted. Having come back from a serious injury I now feel good and am looking forward to the weekend."

"I think [as captain] you've got to be vocal on the pitch, communicate with the manager and make sure the boys are all right."

Martin only featured 17 times last



CAPTAIN: Lee Martin

season after suffering a horrific ankle injury against Leyton Orient in one of his first outings for the Gills, but he

returned to action quicker than expected and, based on what he's seen, Pennock is pleased with his choice.

He said: "Lee possesses all of the qualities a captain should have, he has the experience and is constantly talking to the boys on the pitch."

"That said, everyone has a part to play and we want everybody to be leaders when they cross the white line."

Meanwhile, Gills chairman Paul Scally this week lifted the lid on the club's woes during the previous campaign, which he described as "the worst ever".

"I can't tell you how painful last season was," he added.

"We were fighting relegation and the younger players weren't ready."

"If I was to write a book then one chapter will be on season 2016/17."

Sport Shorts

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County stars arrive for world athletics champs

A NUMBER of Kent athletes will take to the track at the London Stadium over the coming days after the world championships kicked off in the capital on Friday.

Adam Gemili, Dina Asher-Smith, Jack Green and Tom Bosworth have all been named in the squad for the event, five years after the Olympic Games were held in Stratford.

Dartford sprinter Gemili was a doubt for the championships earlier this summer and has been snubbed for the 200m, but has been selected for the 4x100m relay, while Maidstone's Green will compete in the 400m hurdles and 4x400m relay.

Orpington-born Asher-Smith, who won Olympic bronze in the 4x100m relay in 2016 and finished 5th in the 2015 200m world championships final, recently returned to action after suffering fractured a bone in her right foot in February.

She'll represent Great Britain in both disciplines, while Sevenoaks race walker Tom Bosworth will also be out to impress, after clinching an incredible world record last month.



HOPE: Adam Gemili



HOME: Ebbsfleet United's Stonebridge Road

Fleet defender Magri handed Malta call-up

AN EBBSFLEET United defender may find himself up against Harry Kane and the rest of England's attack next month after being called up by Malta for two World Cup qualifiers.

Sam Magri, who only joined from Dover Athletic this summer, has been requested for international duty from August 27 until September 5 after the Fleet received a letter from the Malta FA this week.

The 23-year-old will join up with the squad ahead of qualifiers against England in the Ta' Qali National Stadium on September 1 and then at Hampden Park against Scotland on 4 September.

Magri, a former England youth player, won his first cap for Malta against Slovenia last November and has since played against Iceland, Slovakia, Ukraine and Slovenia.

Brighton trial for Stones prospect

NEWLY-PROMOTED Premier League outfit Brighton & Hove Albion took a Maidstone United prospect on trial earlier this week.

Josh Dorling, 17, was spotted by scouts during a series of impressive performances at centre-half for the Stones' championship-winning academy side last season, and was then invited to join up with the

Brighton squad at their training centre.

Stones boss Jay Saunders told the club's website: "I am delighted for Josh - he's a good kid with a great future ahead of him. To get the opportunity to trial at a Premier League club is an achievement in itself, I am sure he'll give it his all and we wish him every success."

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German Bierfest Ashford

11th, 12th, 13th of August

Bierfest:

General Admission Free all days:

Includes admission to the event including the German Village, Sekt Garden, Bier Garden and the FunTime area except the Bavarian FestTent. No ticket need to be booked up front.

FestTent (Limited Availability)

£5 EARLY BIRD TICKET:

includes a reserved seat in the Bavarian FestTent (seated together) & half-pint FestBier

£20-25 BIER TICKET:

INCLUDES: A guaranteed reserved seat in the Bavarian FestTent (seated together), one stein (2 pint) of FestBier and a nice food plate with Bavarian-style sausage and an Underberg (digestif). Ticket may also access the free part of the event.

£30-35 VIP TICKET:

Includes priority VIP entrance and a guaranteed reserved seat in the VIP area of the Bavarian FestTent with 1 glass of Schlumberger sekt, a Stein (2 pint) of Bier (select between Bavarian Weißbier, Bavarian Festbier, Bavarian Craftbier), a nice food plate with Bavarian-style chicken and a Underberg (digestif).

Corporate?

For corporate offers
please contact
ashford@bierfest.co.uk

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